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Judge considering plea for release

## Louise ruling to be given on Internet

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN AND JAMES BONE IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

LOUISE WOODWARD may learn today whether she is to escape the life sentence imposed on her for murdering the eight-month-old baby Matthew Eappen.

Judge Hillier B. Zobel, who heard emergency motions calling for her release yesterday, said that he could publish his decision on the Internet today. He also gave a hint that the verdict could be reduced to one of assault and battery, which would mean that she could be freed from Framingham prison immediately.

If she does not give his ruling today, Woodward will have to wait at least until Monday to hear her fate.

The judge's statement came after a day of intense arguments by lawyers for both the defence and prosecution in the Cambridge, Massachusetts, court where the 19-year-old British au pair was convicted last Thursday night. Woodward was not in court, but her parents were in the public gallery, as was Matthew's mother, Deborah Eappen.

The defence argued that the murder conviction was unsustainable and asked the judge to quash it or order fresh trial. Failing that, Woodward's lawyers called for the verdict to be reduced to manslaughter — admitting that excluding that possibility during the trial might have been a mistake. "I leave it to your conscience," the defence counsel Barry Schick told the judge.

The prosecution countered that the second-degree murder conviction should stand and scoffed at suggestion that it be reduced to manslaughter, say-



Schick: "I leave it to your conscience"

ing: "The defence should not be permitted to sample the jury's verdict and then elect to move for a reduction to the very charged they opposed sending to the jury in the first place."

In calling for an acquittal or retrial, Mr Schick concentrated on autopsy photographs that had been made available to the defence only after all experts from both sides had completed their testimony. These photographs proved, Mr Schick contended, that the skull fracture suffered by Matthew was an old injury that could not have been inflicted on February 4, the day Woodward is said to have shaken or dropped the child.

Mr Schick said that the "belated disclosure of this exculpatory evidence" led directly to injustice. "There is no argument about the fact that the skull fracture is old. With these photographs in hand there cannot be a guilty verdict."

He added that had the

defence had the photographs earlier, they could have been used in the cross-examination of Dr Gerald Feigin, a neurosurgeon at the Boston Children's Hospital on whom the prosecution relied to argue that the skull fracture was fresh. "Not having these photographs, which showed that healing and 'tipping' had begun, impaired our ability to contradict Dr Feigin's histological arguments... it is not a question of how skillfully we played our cards, but whether or not we had a fair deck."

He also said that had the defence had access to "this overwhelmingly strong scientific evidence," it might not have called Woodward to give evidence.

Mr Schick's Harvey Silverglate then argued that the murder verdict should be reduced to manslaughter, even though the defence still did not accept that she was responsible for Matthew's death.

Mr Silverglate said that even if the jury rejected the defence case that the injury was old, "we don't know whether they convicted her for doing something trivial that was consistent with an accident". That would tend to support the theory that the jury would prefer a verdict of involuntary manslaughter resulting from reckless conduct, which does not attract a life sentence.

But the prosecution lawyers Gerard Leone and Martha Coakley argued that the guilty verdict should not be

Continued on page 2, col 5

Nigel Lawson, page 21



Carolyn Parrington, who decided to waive her anonymity to encourage other women to report rapes, at home near Leicester yesterday

## Rape victim wins record damages

By JOANNA BAILE

A MOTHER of three has been awarded record damages of nearly £74,000 by a county court judge after she sued her former boss, whom she accused of raping her twice.

With costs, this will take the total bill for the company director she claimed attacked her to over £132,000. Carolyn Parrington agreed yesterday to waive her anonymity in *The Times* to encourage other women to report rapes after she left it too late to bring a criminal prosecution.

Judge Victor Hall found that Ms Parrington, 44, was indecently assaulted and raped twice by her boss, Alan Marriott, 43, while working as a laboratory technician for a Leicester textile company where he was production director. She said that the first

attack, in February 1992, took place in the firm's lavatories, while Mr Marriott's wife Lorraine, who worked as his secretary, was in a nearby room. The second rape, she alleged, took place in her son's bedroom nine months later when Mr Marriott called unexpectedly at her home.

She said she was so devastated and ashamed that she could not bring herself to go to the police, which meant that by the time she had summoned the courage to do so, vital scientific evidence was lost.

For a conviction, a case in the criminal courts must be proven beyond reasonable doubt, whereas in the civil courts a plaintiff can win on a lower degree of proof with "on the balance of probabilities".

After an eight-day hearing at Leicester County Court, the judge

awarded Ms Parrington £73,776 damages on Monday in a ground-breaking judgment. Mr Marriott was also ordered to pay £13,500 to the DSS for benefits paid to Ms Parrington because she was unable to work as a result of her ordeal, as well as an estimated £45,000 in costs.

Included in the damages was £30,000 of aggravated damages after Mr Marriott told the court that Ms Parrington was promiscuous and had consented to sex. The judge described this as "culpable behaviour" which called for a large element of aggravated damages.

The previous highest award was £50,000 by the Appeal Court in November 1995 when Linda Griffiths sued her former boss, Arthur Williams, saying that he raped her while she was working for him as a

dishwasher at his hotel in Cornwall. Ms Parrington, of Broughton Astley, Leicestershire, is donating a substantial part of her award to her local Rape Crisis Centre. She said: "I did not bring this case to get money for myself, but to punish him. He should be in prison, but, like many women, I was so traumatised by what he did to me that I could not bring myself to tell anyone, let alone go to the police straight away."

"I felt shame and guilt, so I just switched off and pretended that it had not happened. It has been a painful five years for me and I am still recovering with the help of counselling and with the support of my boyfriend."

Ms Parrington, who has a 23-year-old daughter and 19-year-old son from her marriage, and a three-year-old son with her current partner, suffers

Continued on page 2, col 5

## Prince heals Spencer rift with tribute to Diana's charity work

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN CAPE TOWN

FOR the first time since the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, the Prince of Wales last night paid public tribute to his former wife's charity work.

Speaking at a formal dinner in Cape Town hosted by President Mandela and with the late Princess's brother, Earl Spencer, among the guests, the Prince offered a gesture of reconciliation towards the Spencer family, helping to heal a rift opened by the Earl in his acerbic address at his sister's funeral.

The Prince, in the keynote speech of his five-day official South African visit, told his audience in the presidential residence: "The bonds between our peoples were demonstrated most clearly after the tragic and untimely death of Diana. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my sons' and my gratitude to all

those South Africans who took the time and trouble to express their condolences. Their messages have been greatly appreciated, and there have been very, very many of them."

He continued: "Over the last few days I have been made very aware of the special importance to Africans of Diana's work to combat such things as Aids, poverty and the use of landmines. And her efforts, I know, in these areas have brought a real difference to the lives of very many people, on this continent and elsewhere."

Lord Spencer, along with all the other guests, gave the Prince a standing ovation at the end of his speech. Earlier, Lord Spencer said: "I have an understanding relationship with the Prince. My family is united in doing everything we can to help in the raising of William and Harry."

The Prince and Lord Spencer, who had not met since the

day after the Princess's funeral, had a brief conversation after the banquet.

At the start of the banquet, at which guests dined on medallions of ostrich with pumpkin fritters, Archbishop Desmond Tutu said in his grace: "We thank you for the life of our President. We thank you for the life of Mother Teresa. We thank you for the visit of the Prince of Wales."

The Prince's speech caused some confusion before its delivery. An advance text issued to reporters earlier in the day contained the tribute to the Princess, but in a second version distributed immediately before the banquet, most of the references had been removed. When the Prince spoke, he restored almost all of the original.

Last night, the Prince spoke of his immense pleasure at being in South Africa, and

paid tribute to Mr Mandela.

"What I have seen here of people working together with determination and confidence for a brighter future, despite all the many awesome challenges which have to be faced, sends me away immensely heartened, and confident that South Africa is firmly on the road to success."

"But what has heartened me most, Mr President, has been listening to you during the course of the conversations I have been fortunate to have with you. If I may say so, you have a huge gift for storytelling in the great African tradition. But you also have a unique gift for the kind of forgiveness that transforms, redeems and renews."

At a banquet in Durban last night the Prince said that he had been given so many spears as gifts that he could start a Zulu war of his own.

Police seek Fiat, page 19

## Royal Opera could face bankruptcy within week

By NICHOLAS WOOD

THE Royal Opera company could be forced to declare itself bankrupt within a week, Lord Chadlington, its chairman, told MPs yesterday.

In a graphic warning of the extent of the crisis at Covent Garden, Lord Chadlington disclosed that he was having daily talks with beneficiaries in an attempt to keep it afloat.

He said that he had until November 12 to present a rescue package to the Arts Council. Covent Garden is losing £4.7 million a year and its difficulties have been intensified by its closure pending a two-year redevelopment.

Lord Chadlington's revelations came as Gerald Kaufman, chairman of the Culture, Media and Sports select committee, suggested that the lifeblood of the country's premier opera house was "dribbling away all the time". Lord Chadlington told the



"If Chris Smith can get everyone in opera under one roof surely we can manage my parents for Christmas"

MPs: "We have looked at two or three options involving third parties, but to give details would be wrong. If we cannot get funds into the

Royal Opera House in the very short term, the probability is the house will become insolvent."

Lord Chadlington, who has been chairman a year, said that only after recent management changes had it been possible to get clear and accurate figures about the company. It had spent a year without a finance director.

Trying to get a grip on the figures had been like "trying to catch a falling star. They changed every month in the most alarming way."

He said that if the opera company continued its activities while insolvent its directors could be guilty of "wrongly trading". But it might be possible to stitch together a rescue plan. "It is going to be extremely difficult. We have a small opportunity."

Culture clash, page 5  
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LANVIN

H O M E

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# Fluoride in the water would put bite into toothless debate

On the London Underground on Monday, alighting at Westminster Station, your sketchwriter spotted the Liberal Democrat MP for Carshalton & Wallington, Tom Brake. "Must rush," he said. "I'm off to tell a meeting about my teeth."

I expressed mild alarm. He explained, "My dentist has been overwhelmed by the metalwork in my mouth." I looked baffled. "It's a meeting of the British Fluoridation Society," he said. "I want to tell them that, if

only the water had been fluoridated when I was a boy, I would not have these dreadful teeth." Mr Brake ventured a shy smile.

Taking a quick peek into the MP's mouth, which was open at the time, I judged this harsh; but the incisors were ragged, the canines grey and the molars a terrible mess.

How much of his dental history did Mr Brake plan to offer the meeting? Before I could ask, he was gone.

We recount the tale in no spirit of mockery. There are only limited areas on which

an MP can speak with passion, sincerity, genuine interest and full possession of all the facts, and we should be grateful if they stick to these. If Brake confines himself in debate to the subject of his own teeth he will never be contradicted.

Nor is this intended as criticism of Mr Brake. We who have sat through tedious hours in which MPs elevate their own chatter to the status of leading testimony in national debate are relieved that at least Tom Brake has a sense of humour about him-

self. But is it not a little-noticed privilege of being an elected politician that you are paid to rehearse, amid all the gothic splendour of the Palace of Westminster, the sort of conversation others have while hanging out the washing, or on buses? Who else gets a salary, a chorus of "hear-hear", a paragraph in *Hansard*, or a mention on

Yesterday in *Parliament*, for the anecdote, quack-theorising and half-ignorant saloon-bar chat that characterise Commons discourse? Only newspaper columnists are luckier.

My secretary, Mrs Wright, has a friend with a troubled dental history. "Wendy could write a book about her teeth," Mrs Wright once confided.

Wendy could, but who would publish? Yet if we elected Wendy to *Parliament* the story of her teeth could fill volumes of *Hansard*.

With Tom and Wendy in mind, I looked in on MPs yesterday to hear Richard Spring (C, Suffolk W) introduce a Bill with no hope of making it into law: the Prohibition of Bull Bars Bill.

Mr Spring was already in mid-flow. "... so I got out of my Volvo Estate to examine the damage. I was horrified..." The MP was telling one of those interminable motor-

ing stories. All around him, MPs nodded interestedly.

The chassis was buckled. The car was a write-off. Now, if a bull-bar can do that to a Volvo Estate, imagine the damage it could do...

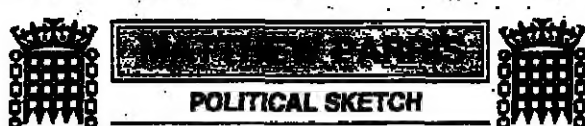
Richard Spring's purpose was, noble, intended to save lives. He is one of a brave and determined band of backbenchers from all parties who are campaigning for the prohibition of "bull-bars".

Doubtless these accessories can be lethal. But now the European Commission knows about the state of Mr Spring's

Volvo, they must act at once. After Spring had finished, Tory Education Spokesman Stephen Dorrell opened a debate on Government proposals for student finance.

He spoke well but it was his audience which interested me. A great man, often the only one to attend such occasions, slipped in. Soon listening intently was Kenneth Clarke, the former Chancellor and the founder member of the new Euro-friendly "Conservative Mainstream".

It is not yet known whether Mr Dorrell is a sympathiser.



## Labour and Lib Dems try to reverse Eurosceptic tide

Brown attacks bogus patriotism of the Right, reports Philip Webster

A NATIONAL campaign to counter Eurosceptic sentiment in Britain was launched by the Government and the Liberal Democrats last night, as Gordon Brown attacked the "bogus" patriotism of the Right.

Tony Blair, senior ministers and Liberal Democrat leaders took the first steps towards what may eventually become a cross-party coalition for a "yes" campaign in a single currency referendum after the next election.

At only the second meeting of the Labour-Liberal Cabinet committee on the constitution, the party leaders agreed that the British presidency of the European Union, starting in January, should aim to build a "national consensus" that Britain gained from Europe and Europe benefited from Britain.

The Chancellor fired an opening shot by rejecting right-wing claims that anti-Europeanism was pro-British, as he delivered some of his most enthusiastic remarks yet about the prospects of Britain eventually being part of economic and monetary union.

He declared, in the annual *Spectator* lecture, that a pro-European consensus on the single currency was already being built, and added that Britain had always thrived when it was outward-looking and internationalist rather than isolationist.

His lecture came hours after the Cabinet committee meeting attended by Mr Blair,

Paddy Ashdown, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, and leading Liberal Democrats was dominated by a debate about the need for Britain to take a more positive role.

Mr Blair's spokesman said after the meeting that both sides had agreed that they had a shared interest in "making Britain less Eurosceptic" and that a successful British presidency would help towards that goal by showing the British people the benefits of Britain being a strong and leading player in Europe.

The campaign would try to show that Euroscepticism was not the way to advance the

national interest, officials said. Persuading the public of the potential benefits of a single currency went hand in hand with engineering a more positive approach.

"Paddy Ashdown is a significant figure. If you have got people like him and his colleagues, and Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine arguing a case, then people will respond to that, providing the argument is right."

A Liberal Democrat source added: "We agreed that one of our aims would be to start to build a national consensus, a grand coalition, behind the view that Britain benefits from Europe, and Europe benefits from British membership."

divided into meeting rooms and furnished by British designers commissioned by the Government.

A Foreign Office spokesman said that careful thought had gone into the setting. "The theme that we have been developing is the idea of two modern nations working together into the millennium. The choice of venue is designed to reflect this."

A government insider said: "The French have got their *Défense* [the business area of Paris], and we thought we would show them what we could do."

Mr Brown confirmed his reputation as one of Labour's foremost pro-Europeans by arguing there would be nothing unpatriotic about going into a largely philosophical speech about "Britishness". Mr Brown said the British way was not to retreat into insularity and defensive isolationism but to be outward-looking and adaptable.

"Our history shows not just that we have always been a European power but that Britain has been European for good pragmatic reasons. So we should dismiss the notion that our history suggests being British is synonymous with being anti-European."

The Chancellor accused a Conservative Party which normally took a pragmatic view of British national interest of putting national economic interests second to ideology.

"Previous Conservative Governments have sensibly supported the pooling of sovereignty not just in Nato but in the single market, where it is in the British interest to do so."

For years the Right had claimed it was the only patriotic party, and scorned patriotic people on the Left as being anti-British. This bogus dividing line had been swept aside.

"The old caricature - patriotic right versus disloyal left - is exposed as hollow, a card that can never be played again."

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Letters, page 23

### SUMMIT HITS NEW HEIGHTS

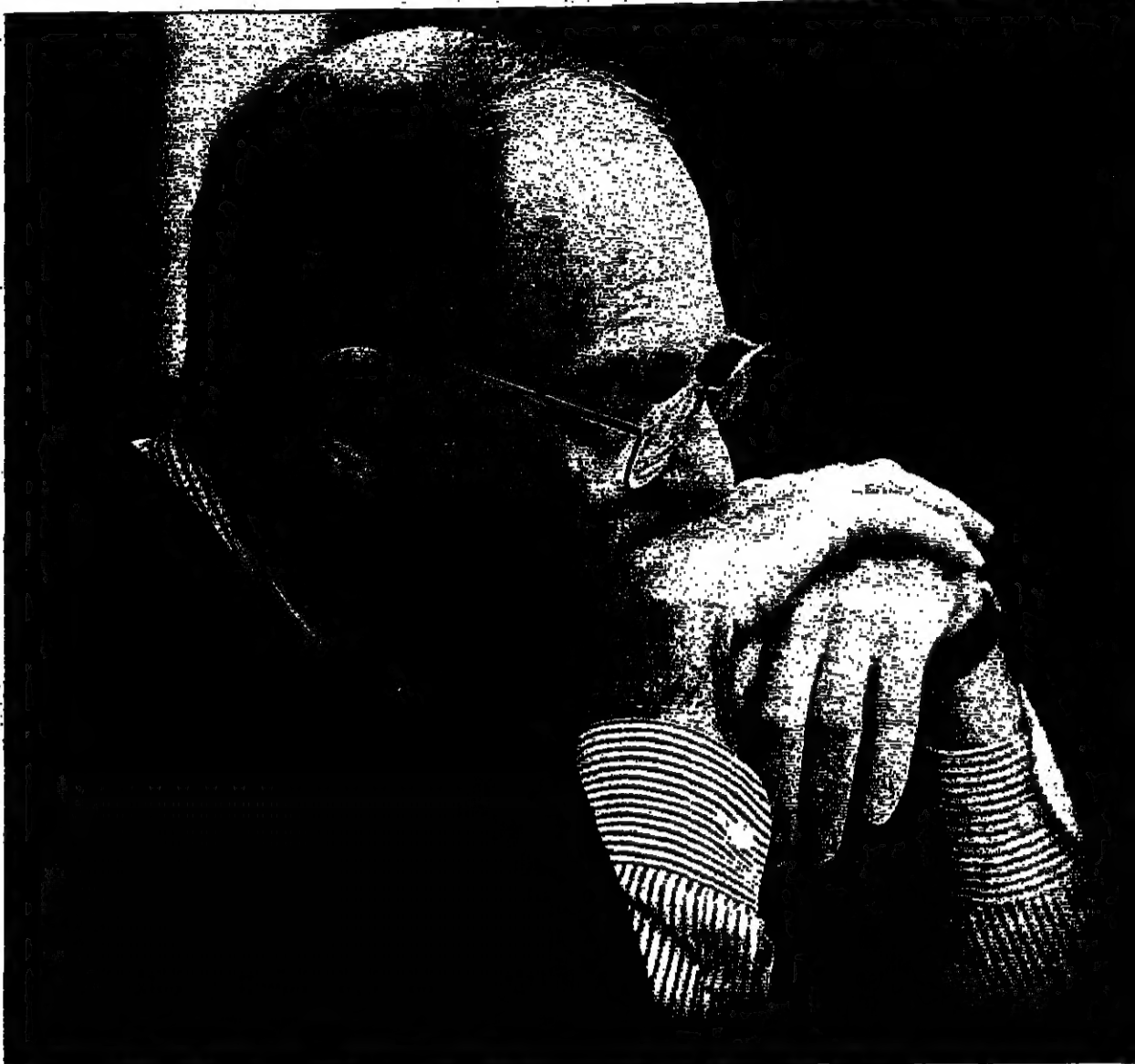
CANARY WHARF tower in London's Docklands is to host this week's Anglo-French summit as part of Tony Blair's drive to update Britain's image (Polly Newman writes).

The Prime Minister will meet his French counterpart, Lionel Jospin, and President Chirac in surroundings which are a world away from previous summit venues such as Chequers and Downing Street. Discussions will be held on two floors of the tower hundreds of feet above the Thames. Big open spaces have been

divided into meeting rooms and furnished by British designers commissioned by the Government.

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Judge Hillier B. Zobel, now living the most exciting moments of his life in the judiciary - and relishing them

## Old lion who is enjoying his chance to lap up the cream

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

AS PROTESTERS chant ceaselessly for Louise Woodward outside his concrete courthouse in Cambridge, as television stations debate the minutiae of the case, and as callers from all over the world jam the telephone lines to his chambers, Judge Hillier B. Zobel has been basking in the attention like an old lion in the sun.

It is fair to say that Judge Zobel, 64, is now living the most exciting moments of his life. Not often does a grey-haired provincial figure attract the world's gaze. Immodest to an almost endearing extent, Judge Zobel is, in the words of a prosecutor here, "just lapping it up like a cat does cream."

His friends say that he spent the weekend at his

spacious home in a Boston suburb. Inside, in his book-lined library, rich in volumes on American history, he will have focused hard on the face of Woodward. According to court officials, he also had a sack-load of post driven to his home, all letters of support for Woodward. "There's a likelihood that he read a fair few," an official said.

Although he did not receive the motion from the defence, and the counter-motion from the prosecution, until Monday afternoon, the arguments made by both sides were sufficiently obvious for him to have been working on a decision by as early as last Saturday. A prosecutor who has worked with him for years said: "There is no question that old Hillier is in his

element. That's a good thing, because we wouldn't want a nervous judge, or a tetchy judge, or a shrinking violet, who buckled under all the attention and lost his focus."

Widely regarded as one of the most erudite judges in Massachusetts, Judge Zobel, a former Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, read law at Harvard Law School, from where he graduated with distinction in 1959.

Born in New York, to a German Jewish family, Judge Zobel was appointed to the state bench in 1979 by Governor Edward King. He arouses strong passions that are as often negative as they are in his favour. Many local lawyers regard him as a cantankerous maverick, who thinks he is cleverer than

everyone else. Others see these traits in a positive light, describing him as fiercely independent, "unafraid of the local political establishment", and "faithful to his principles alone, not those of other, lesser people."

Judge Zobel also has a well-documented dislike for juries, as can be seen from an article he wrote in *American Heritage* magazine in 1995, in which he said that the judicial system expects "average untrained people to absorb evidence for days and weeks on subjects entirely foreign to them without explanation."

The article ended: "Perhaps the jury, to paraphrase what Churchill once said of democracy, is the worst mechanism for trying cases except for any alternative."

## Judge to give Internet ruling

Continued from page 1

overturned, nor should a retrial be ordered simply because the judge thought the jury had "got it wrong". Ms Conkley also rejected the defence claims that its late access to the autopsy pictures had changed the course of the trial. X-rays studied during the trial were a much better guide to the injuries than any photograph.

Finally, Mr Leone argued against reducing the charge to manslaughter, saying: "If the jurors accepted Louise Woodward's story of what happened on February 4, they would have acquitted." For the verdict to be overturned, Woodward would have to produce a new version of events.

Towards the end of Mr Leone's argument, the judge asked him whether he considered Woodward's behaviour to fit the criteria for "assault and battery". Mr Leone said that it did.

Under Massachusetts law, the judge can reduce the charge against Woodward to any lesser offence he thinks fit. If he were to reduce it to assault and battery, Woodward would face a maximum sentence of 2½ years in a "house of correction" - not a state jail.

At the end of the hearing, Judge Zobel said that when he published his ruling, it would be broadcast on the Internet: [www.lawyersweekly.com/matress.htm#latest](http://www.lawyersweekly.com/matress.htm#latest)

## Dismay in Elton at news of delay

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

GROANS of disappointment from supporters gathered in the pub in Louise Woodward's home village greeted the news that the Boston judge would not give an immediate decision on her fate.

Villagers packed into the bar of The Rigger pub in the village of Elton, in Cheshire, closely followed the complicated legal manoeuvrings in the Boston courtroom via satellite television in the public bar. Although campaigners were less optimistic than they were before the verdict last week, many hoped for an indication from the bench that the teenager will soon be home.

Eight domestic and Ameri-

can television crews caught the mood in the cramped bar swinging under the hot lights from expectancy, to disappointment and then a grim resolve for a much lengthier campaign to free Woodward.

For some, like her close friend Kate Hagan, 19, there were tears again.

Miss Hagan, wearing a yellow "Free Louise" T-shirt, said: "It is like they are playing a time game with Louise. You can only take so much. We will have to wait for the next thing to happen. It is very distressing for us all. We are going to fight even harder now for Louise's release."

"It is a case of fighting, fighting, fighting until we bring her home."

## Woman wins record rape damages

Continued from page 1

flashbacks, nightmares, suicidal thoughts, sleeplessness and weight loss which has been diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Her solicitor, Chris Greenwell of Toller, Leicester, said: "This is a record amount of damages for a case of this kind. We were delighted that the judge was prepared to give a higher award than the Court of Appeal, which gave the previous record-breaking damages."

Ms Farrington, who married at the age of 18, says she was naive and vulnerable

when Mr Marriott began sexually harassing her in 1991. She said: "I was already in an extremely fragile emotional state because I had just split up from my husband. Alan knew this and started sexually harassing me when we were alone together in the lab."

"He would ask quite disgusting questions. He also grabbed my breasts and bottom. When I objected, he laughed. He thought it was all a game."

One day, in February 1992, Mr Marriott followed Ms Farrington into a lavatory adjoining her laboratory, used only by

her and her colleague. It was there that he raped her, she says.

It was only when she met her current partner in 1993 that she was able to begin to talk about what had happened. She left the company in December 1993 and a doctor referred her to a Rape Crisis Centre. She underwent counselling before making a statement to the police in 1994, but decided against pursuing a criminal case due to lack of forensic evidence.

She now works as a waitress. She said: "Men in suits in positions of authority still frighten me so I cannot work in an office."

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# Bishop backs homosexual sex for over-16s

Harries's announcement plunges Church into crisis that will rival women priests, reports Ruth Gledhill

THE Bishop of Oxford, the Right Rev Richard Harries, plunged the Church of England into a new crisis over homosexuality last night when he called for the age of homosexual consent to be lowered from 18 to 16.

Bishop Harries, chairman of the Church of England bishops' group on homosexuality, is backing proposals to lower the age of homosexual consent from 18 to 16. Bishop Harries, a leading adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, admitted last night that he had changed his mind on the issue and is now publicly advocating an equalising of the age of consent.

While other bishops back him privately, Bishop Harries is the first of the current diocesan bishops in the Church of England to speak out publicly in support of lowering the age of consent. His intervention comes as Parliament prepares to debate the issue next spring. A free vote will be allowed.

Although the amendment is expected to be passed by the Commons, in the House of Lords, a more conservative body, support from the bench of bishops will be critical. On the last occasion the issue came up in Parliament, in 1994, most bishops voted for an age of homosexual consent of 21 or 18.

Three bishops voted that it should be lowered to 16 but only one of these, Dr David Jenkins of Durham, who is now retired, was from the Church of England. The other two were the Right Rev Richard Holloway, of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Right Rev Rowan Williams, bishop of Monmouth in the Church in Wales.

Significantly, Bishop Williams is emerging as a favourite to succeed the Right Rev Roy Williams in Seathwaik, an appointment which

would give added impetus to the church's pro-gay liberal wing if it goes through.

A spokesman for Bishop Harries said that out of the current house of bishops, Bishop Harries was the first bishop to take this line publicly. "The fact that he is in charge of the bishops' group on homosexuality makes it highly significant," he said.

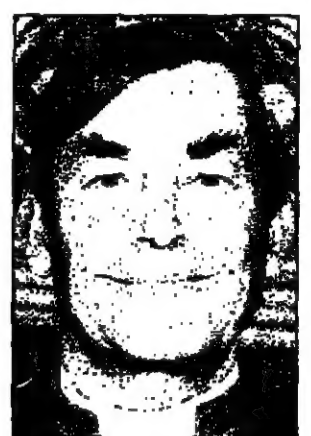
Bishop Harries made his comments on Monday night at a private meeting of Berkshire clergy from his diocese at St George's House, Windsor, a residential study centre at Windsor Castle.

The bishops are expected to debate the issue at their next meeting in January. This will be shortly before the issue comes before Parliament. It is expected to come up as an amendment to the Crime and Disorder Bill, expected to be introduced by Jack Straw in the next few weeks. An amendment is likely to be tabled during the report stage of the Bill in the spring for the age of homosexual consent to be lowered to 16. The Government has announced it will allow a free vote.

Supporters are thought to include William Hague, who voted in favour of lowering the age of consent to 16 in 1994.

Bishop Harries was condemned by evangelicals within the established church, which is facing a split over the issue more serious than that threatened by women priests. Already, one parish, Jesmond in Newcastle, has declared itself out of communion with its new diocesan bishop, the Right Rev Martin Wharton, because of his statement that homosexuality within a loving, permanent relationship "is no sin".

As the church leadership pursues an increasingly liberal line, other parishes are expected to follow suit.

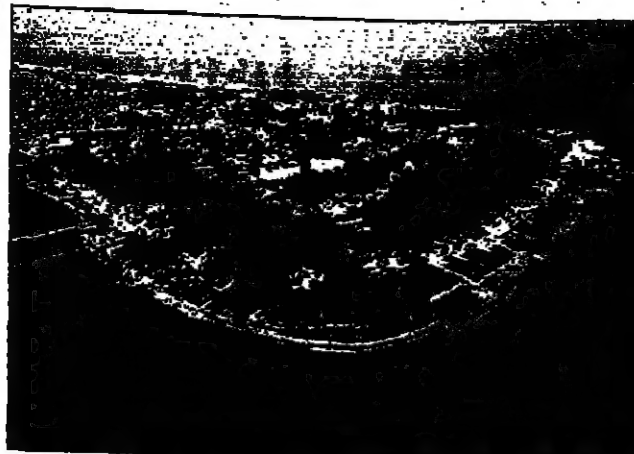


Bishop Harries said he had changed his mind

which has the Duke of Edinburgh as its vice-chairman.

In an interview with *The Times* yesterday, Bishop Harries enlarged on his views. He said: "I do support the lowering of the age of consent for homosexuals to 16. The last time it came before Parliament, I supported an age of consent of 16. I have changed my mind."

"Before, I took the view that between the ages of 16 and 18 a person's sexuality was still fluid and unformed, and that it was important for them to be given the chance to develop heterosexual relationships if



The house on the exclusive Sandbanks peninsula, left, overlooks Poole harbour. Right, Boycott's £600,000 Yorkshire farmhouse



## Boycott is declaring himself for the South

NELSON would have had to step off his column and amble down the Mall before Geoffrey Boycott left Yorkshire. The impossible, however, now looks inevitable. England and Yorkshire's toughest opening bat is set to sell up and move South. Not just down to Sheffield. He is going all the way down to Bournemouth in Dorset — in cricketing terms, a minor county.

Mr Boycott, who has parlayed the bloody-mindedness he showed in front of the stumps into a successful career as a cricket commentator, has put Pear Tree Farm, in the village of Woolley, near Wakefield, on the market for a reported £600,000 through Hodson's estate agents in Wakefield.

Even in a county renowned for the forthrightness of its residents, Mr Boycott's reluctance to keep his own council has made him as many enemies as friends. Nonetheless, he remains as potent a symbol of Yorkshire as the eponymous batter pudding.

Speaking on the television company TWI, for which he is commenting in Pakistan at the moment, Mr Boycott said: "This rumour about me leaving Yorkshire has been going round for six months now. It's got nothing to do with me." Mark Adams, of Hodson's, however, confirmed that Mr Boycott had asked to sell his house by private treaty.

He has bought a £400,000 property in Bournemouth to share with his partner, Anne Wyatt. The cricket umpire Dickie Bird, a fellow Yorkshireman, said: "He is moving and going down to Bournemouth with Anne. He

Philip Delves Broughton on the surprise as Yorkshire

hero ups stumps for Bournemouth

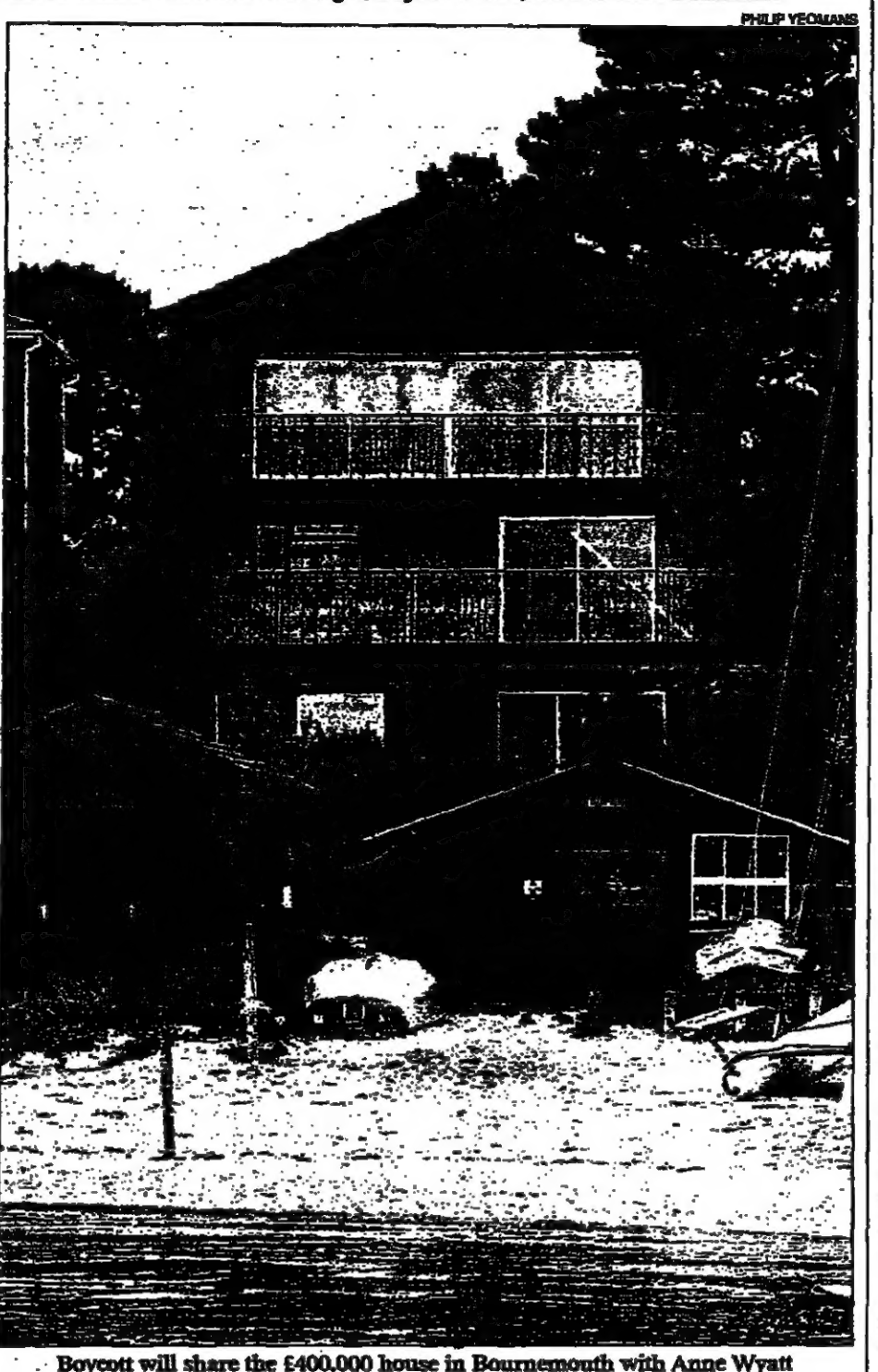
is a Yorkshireman through and through, which is why I am very surprised he is going. "I would think he could move anytime now because they have already got a house in Bournemouth where they are ready to move in," he added yesterday.

The vicar of St Peter's church in Woolley, the Rev Catherine Ogle, said: "It's lovely to have a celebrity in the village but sadly he never came to church. We will be sorry to see him go though."

Others in the village were not so sorry. David Rowbotham, owner of the local golf club, said: "He never partook in village activities. But that's his choice."

Mr Boycott was born in the west Yorkshire pit village of Fitzwilliam. It was at Headingley in Leeds that he celebrated his greatest triumph, his 100th first class century, against the Australians in 1977.

Bernard Fowler, landlord of the Sir Geoffrey Boycott pub in Dewsbury, where they believe Mr Boycott is overdue a knighthood, said: "Though it is sad he is leaving us, I assume he will maintain the warm feeling for Yorkshire in his heart when he starts resting his hat elsewhere."



Boycott will share the £400,000 house in Bournemouth with Anne Wyatt

Mr Fowler's assumption is safe. Only three things are said to make the story-heard Boycott go: his mother, his bat and his county. Last July, when testifying in the libel suit brought by the cricketers Ian Botham and

Alan Lamb against Imran Khan, Mr Boycott, having given his Yorkshire address said: "That's in England." George Carman, QC, one of the barristers in the case, asked him: "It hasn't declared independence yet?" Mr Boycott replied: "We like to think we're a bit different."

## French cricket for Benaud

By JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

RICHIE BENAUD, the much-parodied cricket commentator and former Australian captain, has accepted an invitation to become the honorary patron of France Cricket, the new governing body of the sport across the Channel.

Benaud, 67, who has French ancestry and lives on the Riviera for six months of the year, said he was delighted to accept the post as titular benefactor of an organisation of 38 clubs and 800 players. "I am looking forward to be able to attend some events next summer, and fit in with whatever the national committee thinks best for cricket in France."

The offer was made by Simon Hewitt, the captain of the French national team, which has won the European Federation Championship for the last two years, playing against all the continental countries — except for Eng-

land, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark and Holland.

Hewitt said that he had heard from Ian Chappell, the former Australian captain, at the International Cricket Conference meeting in Malaysia earlier this year that Benaud, who won 63 caps for Australia, had French ancestors.

"When I went to the NatWest final at Lord's in September, I asked to meet Richie, and he provisionally accepted the offer," he said. On October 18, the French cricketers voted to secede from the French Baseball Federation and set up their own organisation, France Cricket, and Benaud's post as patron was approved by acclamation at that meeting.

Yesterday Benaud was on his way from Sydney to Brisbane to commentate on the Test match between Australia and New Zealand. He said that he would be happy to



Benaud: delighted with his new role

offer advice on coaching and development, particularly to some of the 200 Frenchmen now playing the game. Hewitt explained: "We had to give him details of the current structure here before he agreed to our offer."

There is a national club

competition and the French team has to include at least seven people who hold French passports and three of them must have been born in the country. But Hewitt said: "We currently have at least five or six players who were born in this country representing the national team."

"There is a great deal of curiosity about cricket here and quite a lot of coverage in newspapers and television, although we have to explain what it's about. We even have cricket on the curriculum of a school in Picardy. There are four or five French bowlers who are really good, and the French take naturally to fielding. Batting is not so easy."

France, who won a silver medal in cricket at the 1900 Olympics, will be taking part in the European championship in the Hague next year, when all the continental countries will be participating. England will send an amateur side.

## Formula One tobacco ban stalls

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government has reluctantly decided to abandon its plan to ban tobacco sponsorship of Formula One motor racing. Instead it will press the sport's governing body to introduce a voluntary code to reduce the level of advertising at racetracks worldwide.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, announced in June that the Government would ban all sports sponsorship by tobacco companies without exception as part of the drive to reduce smoking. However, after long negotiations with the Fédération Internationale d'Automobile, Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, has concluded that it would be counterproductive to bring in the ban for Formula One, which derives about £100 million a year from the tobacco industry.

A ban has been included in the draft for the European Directive on controlling tobacco sponsorship, but yesterday Ms Jowell sent a letter to her opposite

numbers in the EU advising them that it would be best to exclude Formula One. British representatives at a meeting of member state officials explained that there was a danger that a ban would almost certainly result in the FIA moving all its races out of the EU to Eastern Europe and Asia, where tobacco advertising controls are much weaker.

The directive is due to be discussed by Ministers at a Council meeting in Brussels on December 4, but passing it could be a priority for the British presidency of the EU during the first six months of next year.

"We think tobacco sponsorship can be phased out in other sports over a period, but it just won't work with Formula One," the Health Department said last night. "The sport is worldwide and can move anywhere. With a ban we run the risk of driving Formula One to places where there is less of a tobacco-control regime. We can't stop television pictures coming

back from the Grand Prix and there is a very real risk of there being more tobacco exposure in the pictures. We are therefore seeking a total exemption for Formula One from the directive."

"We have been in close and urgent talks with the FIA and are looking for a tough voluntary code on a global scale, which will reduce advertising worldwide not just in Europe. This might include agreements on smaller logos or even doing away with some logos completely. We want to reduce the amount of tobacco visibility in the sport. The FIA is keen to co-operate and this therefore seems the best way of going about it."

"Ideally, we would like to ban sponsorship, but we are living in the real world and we are trying to find a solution to a unique problem in a unique sport."

The department said it had looked at technology that would make it possible to blot logos off television pictures, but had decided this would not work either.

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## Republican terrorist group may be planning new attack

BY MARTIN FLETCHER  
CHIEF IRELAND  
CORRESPONDENT

THE republican terrorist group responsible for Friday's failed bombing in Londonderry has gained access to Semtex and is expected to launch another attack before the weekend, senior security sources said last night.

The Continuity IRA, once dismissed as little more than a joke, appeared to be receiving assistance from a few rebellious IRA hardliners and now posed the single deadliest threat to the peace process, the sources said. "They are reckoned to be a real threat and the security forces are acting accordingly," one official said.

The Provisional IRA is worried about them and we are worried about them — more and more worried about them," another said. With Republican Sinn Féin, widely regarded as Continuity IRA's political wing, holding its annual conference in Dublin this weekend, a further morale-boosting attack was "extremely likely if they can get it together", the second official added.

The sources said the Londonderry bomb, left in a government office building on the eve of Hillary Clinton's visit to Northern Ireland, consisted of 1.5lb of Semtex and would have caused a massive explosion had the detonator not failed to ignite it. Merely carrying such a device "through crowded streets was criminal in the extreme", an official said.

But equally alarming was the fact that Continuity IRA had, for the first time, used Semtex, previously possessed only by the IRA. Security sources agreed this probably came from an IRA stockpile and blamed hardliners opposed to the ceasefire.

They are confident that the IRA leadership did not approve the transfer. IRA leaders viewed the development "with alarm" because it endangered the peace process.

Continuity IRA dates from a Sinn Féin split in 1986, but became militarily active only after the IRA's 1995 ceasefire. It bombed the Killybegs hotel in Fermanagh last year, and Markethill, Co Armagh, in September, and has mounted several unsuccessful attacks.

These have raised its profile at a time when there is significant opposition to the ceasefire among grassroots members of the IRA. As yet, security officials see no evidence of large-scale defections, but say there are worrying signs of a "fraying at the edges" in areas such as South Armagh and Londonderry.

## Culture clash over opera tours

Critics say the Smith plan would be bad for London and would cost more money, reports Dalya Alberge

ONE of the Royal Opera House's most powerful benefactors expressed grave concern yesterday about the future of opera and ballet in London, after news that the English National Opera may have to share the Covent Garden home of the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet.

Lord Sainsbury, president of the Royal Opera House's appeal and chairman of the Royal Ballet governors, said: "It's a sad day that we have to go back to one opera house in London." The ROH's former head, Sir Jeremy Isaacs, and the financial controller of Opera North also criticised the proposals by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary.

Lord Sainsbury was particularly anxious that ballet could be overshadowed by two opera companies, and that there could be a reduction in the number of dance performances. The idea of sending companies out on tour for two thirds of the year was "pie in the sky", he said. "To say we'll get the companies touring is the most expensive thing you can do."

London would be "the poorer for it", he said. "It means fewer performances of the lyric arts. It puts London's

comparison with other main cities in a poor light. Paris has five theatres and Berlin has three.

"I'm very anxious that the sharing of performances means that, whilst there is no more opera than now, there is no less ballet than now. The Royal Ballet should continue its share of half the evenings. If there's any diminishing in the opportunities for them to perform at the ROH, the governors will have to consider their position. It would affect support for the ballet if there's less ballet, whether from me or anyone else."

Lord Sainsbury blamed the ROH's problems on inadequate funding by the last Government, but acknowledged that the situation could not continue in its present form.

Sir Jeremy described the plans as "tragic and catastrophic" and said that taking the companies on tour would dramatically increase spending. A week's tour to Manchester some years ago had cost the Royal Opera £300,000.

"These proposals are patently and self-evidently far more expensive than the present state of affairs," he

said. "They could not be done on the present level of funding — only if the funds were taken to a greatly enhanced level. Money should be applied to underpinning the viability of two exceptional companies instead of on rail fares, hotels, subsistence and landladies up and down the country."

Opera North's financial controller, David Hogan, said that its tours, with 130 people in three productions to five towns last spring, cost £469,000. The box-office income was £265,000. "The greatest cost is the principal artists, closely followed by subsistence. With a bigger company, their subsistence is going to be huge. The problem is that when you tour, you tour to small theatres."

"ENO and the RO's choruses are too large and they would never fit on the stages. They are used to larger stages. If they're only at Covent Garden for one-third of the year, they will need large choruses and orchestras in the home base but they wouldn't all be able to tour."

The prospect of two opera companies encroaching on their territory is unnerving for the regional companies. Opera North covers the whole of the North of England. "Any eating into the area would be destructive for us," said Mr Hogan.

Warren Smith, general manager of the Grand Theatre in Leeds, saw the proposals as a "rethink" and said: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating. When Opera North was established 18 years ago, people were very dubious. The fact was, it proved there is an audience. The question now is, how big can that audience get?"

Simon Jenkins, page 22  
Arts, page 39



Hogan, left, and Isaacs, who objects to spending on "rail fares, subsistence and landladies"



## ENO fears a drastic cut in performances

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE news that the English National Opera may have to move into Covent Garden with the Royal Opera was greeted with dismay at the Coliseum, the company's current home. The greatest fear was that the number of performances would be drastically cut.

Staff, who learnt of Chris Smith's proposal in the press yesterday morning, were called to an emergency meeting at lunchtime, where they were briefed by Paul Daniel, the ENO's music director.

Members of the company said afterwards that the atmosphere had been "remarkably relaxed", considering the shock of the announcement. They said that they would cooperate with the review but warned that a move could destroy the unique "family" of the company and its audience. At present the ENO stages at least 190 performances a year, which would almost certainly have to be substantially reduced if the company had to share.

"The ENO has always been a strong family company. The audience are extremely loyal and we do more performances than any other company in Britain," said David Dyer, a member of the

chorus. "In this house they can come and see an opera for £2.50, the same as a pint in some places in the West End."

Mr Dyer was sceptical about the suggestion that the ENO would give more performances outside the capital if it had to share a home. "We would love to tour more, but it's very expensive." He pointed out that excellent regional opera companies already existed.

Helen Robertson-Barber, of the music staff, said job cuts were not mentioned at the meeting. "Nobody said a word about jobs. Everybody just wants the identity of the company to be preserved."



Royal Ballet dancers rehearsing for a tour with choreographer Ashley Page

## Concern over funding for hi-tech redesign

By DALYA ALBERGE

THE architect of the Royal Opera House's redevelopment insisted yesterday that the £214 million scheme was running on time and within budget, and that it would be able to accommodate another company with ease. Insiders, however, expressed doubts because tens of millions of pounds had still to be raised.

Although Jeremy Dixon, the architect, said that everything was running to plan, one observer said that "fundraising has hit the buffers". The ROH has found itself trying to raise cash from the same potential donors as

the Bankside Tate Gallery, Sadler's Wells and others.

The redevelopment meant that the ROH would boast the most sophisticated technology of any British theatre, said John Seekings, development director. "We've had a Victorian opera house with Dickensian facilities. We've gone straight from 19th-century operations to 21st-century operations. We think it will make others in Europe green with envy."

Working practices were also antiquated, although many have been negotiated. In the old house, said Mr Seekings, staff on shifts were required to work 24 hours a

day for seven days a week, stripping out the lighting, scenery, props and hangings in time for the next performance or rehearsal. Because everything was handled manually, loaded on and off lorries and from storerooms, there was the risk of damage. In the new house, a night crew will not be needed.

The mechanisation, including motorised hoists, wheeled platforms and carousels, has reduced the "turnaround time" from six hours to two-and-a-half hours. The main carousel, for example, will mean that for up to five productions can be stored above the stage.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

## MP faces insurance and MoT charges

Ann Clwyd, the Labour MP for Cynon Valley, has been charged with driving without insurance after being stopped for allegedly driving through a red traffic light. The former member of the Shadow Cabinet is also charged with driving without a valid MoT certificate and three other motoring offences.

Mrs Clwyd, 60, was stopped in Cardiff in February. She did not appear before city magistrates. The case was adjourned until next month because of her "working commitments".

## Porter case ends

The appeal by Dame Shirley Porter and others against a £31 million surcharge imposed for their role in the Westminster council "homes for votes" affair was unfair and procedurally flawed, her lawyers said at the end of a 23-day hearing. The three High Court judges may delay their decision until after Christmas.

## Fayed deal

A caretaker and assistant stalker on Mohamed Al Fayed's Balmaghown Castle estate in the Highlands, who claims he was dismissed after taking his first day off work for two years, dropped his case for unfair dismissal. Matt Elliot, 56, reached a settlement believed to be for £4,500 the day before a tribunal hearing.

## £155,000 for RSI

A former bank clerk who will never work again because of repetitive strain injury (RSI) has been awarded £155,000 in compensation by a London county court. Michelle Mulligan, 43, started suffering from the upper-limb disorder after her workload quadrupled at the Midland Bank in Cillingham, Kent, five years ago.

## Birth award lost

A woman who suffered serious health problems after the forceps delivery of her first child, weighing 11lb 2oz, lost her £64,000 damages award. The Court of Appeal ruled that a consultant at Maidstone hospital had not been negligent in his treatment of Samantha Knight, 34, of Appledore, Kent.

## Call me Kennedy

The violinist Nigel Kennedy is to drop the name "Nigel" for all future concerts, recordings and public appearances and wants to be known simply as Kennedy. The intention is to make people take him more seriously. His record company, EMI Classics, said: "He wants to be positioned as a first-class violinist again."

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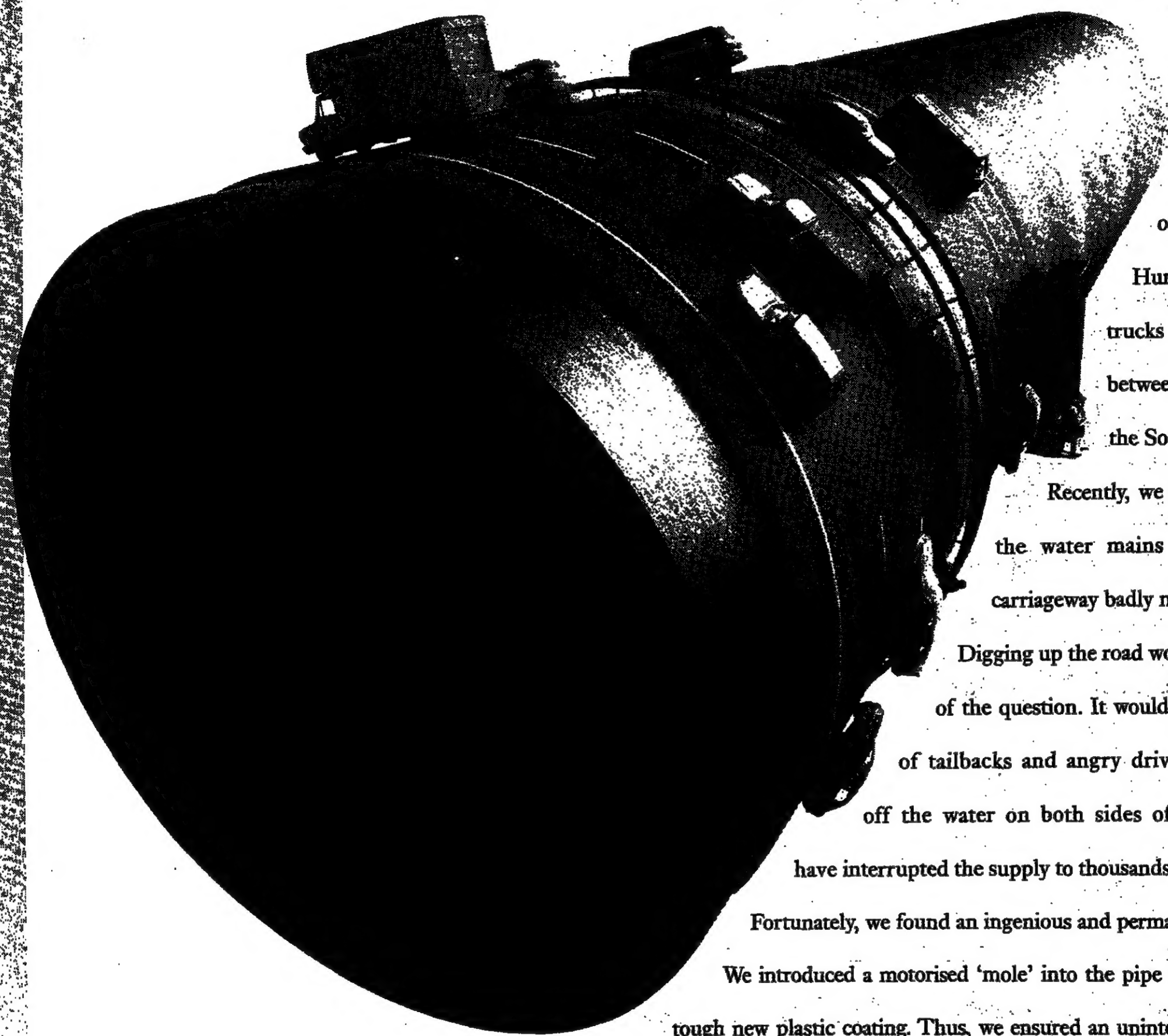
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# Mob wanted to kill me, says crying WPC

By ADAM FRESKO

A WPC broke down in tears in court yesterday as she described how she found herself alone among a crowd of youngsters who attacked her screaming: "kill her, kill her."

Alison Mullins, who has been with the Metropolitan Police for almost 12 years, described how she was repeatedly punched and had her hair pulled by the group.

As tears streamed down the officer's face, Judge George Bathurst Norman allowed her a few minutes to compose herself. She had to be given a glass of water and a seat by the court usher, but refused an offer from the judge for a short break to recover.

The officer told Southwark Crown Court that she was alone in a police van driving through Frith Street, Soho, central London, in the early hours of March 11 this year when she was confronted with a crowd standing in the middle of the road.

She said: "I tooted my horn to get them to move out of the way and they all started shouting abuse at me. There



Accused: Paul Cooper and Deborah Gross were abusive and violent, court was told

were approximately 20 in the group. I began to move through them and as I did I noticed a white male I now know to be Paul Cooper with a white female.

"As I passed them I checked my rear wing mirror and saw Mr Cooper kick the bumper of the van." She got out of the van to question him and he became abusive, shouting and swearing at her.

Smelling alcohol on his breath she arrested him but as she did so others in the group tried to pull him away from her, a jury heard. She added:

"I arrested him for being drunk and disorderly. I took hold of his arm and as I did so a female with him started pulling at Mr Cooper and shouting abuse at me. She was trying to pull him away. I was on my own and asked for some assistance via the radio."

During the attack Jack Gordon, a university student, tried to grab her baton, she said. "He started pulling at my elbow and arm, shouting 'Get the stick! Kill her, Kill her!'" she said. "All the others started shouting this and other abuse." She said that despite

her ordeal, she refused to let go of Mr Cooper.

WPC Mullins added "The female was constantly grabbing at my hair and pulling and screaming abuse at me. It was all swearing, just a barrage. I was then bundled across the road and slammed into a window."

The officer said she was held in a bear hug and repeatedly punched in the chest despite her ordering the revellers to "get off me."

She was finally rescued by fellow officers. She added: "Afterwards I went and sat at the back of a police van. I felt sick and very shocked." The court heard she suffered a number of injuries and had to take time off from work.

Deborah Gross, 18, unemployed, of Guildford, Surrey; Nigel Soole, 24, a cellar supervisor, of Balham, south west London; Stephen Yarrington, 24, an order processor, of Ashford, Middlesex; Paul Cooper, 24, a software production assistant, of Byfleet Road, Cobham, Surrey; and Jack Gordon, 18, a student, of Ashford, Surrey, all deny violent disorder and affray. The trial continues.



Alison Mullins: told court that she was attacked by screaming crowd

## Brothers are jailed for £30m alcohol fraud

By STEWART TENDLER  
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

TWO brothers who flooded London and the Home Counties with cheap alcohol in a £30 million excise fraud were jailed for 3½ years yesterday and ordered to pay £1 million each.

Kulwant Hare, 42, and his brother, Sohan, 49, both of Loughborough, Essex, each pleaded guilty at Southwark Crown Court to four charges of fraudulently evading excise duty.

Lorryloads of beer and whisky were taken from duty-free warehouses ostensibly for export, but then sold cheaply to a network of shops and off-licences. A case of 12 bottles of whisky was sold for £70 instead of at least £120.

At an earlier hearing, another brother, Avtar, 37, a struck-off barrister who became an expert on customs law, was jailed for 5½ years as the alleged mastermind of the fraud. Yesterday his brothers were ordered to pay the £1 million each or have a further five years added to their sentences. Avtar already has an order against him for the same amount.

His brothers claimed that the fraud was committed to save the family business, but Judge Jeffrey Rucker told them: "This was a fraud on a massive scale, and on the public at large. It made you large profits and you were perfectly happy to reap the benefits for the survival of the family business and to fill its coffers."

The brothers helped to run cash-and-carry warehouses which sold wine, beer and spirits at such low prices that they upset other traders, wholesalers and manufacturers. According to Kulwant Hare's barrister, he made £3 million from his part in the fraud.

Richard Sutton, QC, for the prosecution, told the court that front companies had been set up to provide a distance between the goods being bought and the eventual destination. Shipments were made to warehouses across Britain and then shipped back to the Hares' outlets in Barking and Leyton.

## Multiple births rising with test-tube successes

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE number of test-tube babies is rising rapidly, with increasing risks of multiple births, official figures showed yesterday.

There have been more than 21,000 live births in Britain using the methods pioneered in Cambridge in 1978. A quarter of the total have been born in the past two years, and more than 13 women a day are now giving birth after fertility treatment, as an increasing number of couples take advantage of improved techniques.

The multiple birth rate from test-tube pregnancies is higher than ever, according to figures published in the annual report of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority. In the past 15 months there were 142 test-tube births, of which

1,774 were twins, triplets or quads.

The stillbirth and neonatal death rate for a triplet pregnancy, with one or more babies dying, is 82.6 per 1,000 births, compared to just eight per 1,000 for single pregnancies.

Ruth Deech, the authority chairman, said: "Multiple births can be the source of much stress and anxiety for parents. There is a greater risk of complications or even miscarriage, as well as long-term disability, and these can cause considerable emotional and financial pressure."

"People undergoing IVF treatment should be aware that as the technique becomes more successful, so the risk of multiple birth increases." A

woman has a better chance of becoming pregnant if more than one embryo is transferred.

With one embryo, the pregnancy rate is 8.4 per cent and the live birth rate 6.8 per cent. With three embryos, the pregnancy rate rises to 26 per cent with 21.4 per cent live births. Overall, 18.5 per cent of IVF patients become pregnant, and 15 per cent have live babies.

The authority is still making up its mind about the question of expenses for egg and sperm donors, after controversy about payments for surrogate mothers. Patient groups, clinics and other interested parties are being consulted to decide the most appropriate method of repaying costs.

## University hit by meningitis considers inoculation for all

By PETER FOSTER

SOUTHAMPTON University may introduce routine meningitis vaccinations for all first-year students, after two outbreaks of the disease on British campuses in the past year, it emerged yesterday.

Three Southampton students have died in the past month. Howard Newby, the Vice-Chancellor, said: "We are actively considering what steps to take to reassure parents and students and protect them against this disease. We shall seek expert medical advice and, if that means vaccinating all students, then that is what we will do."

Last year two students died in Cardiff after an outbreak of the same type-C meningitis. Yesterday the National Union

A memorial service was held yesterday for the first student to die from meningitis at Southampton University, Melissa Irvine, 19, who had been studying music and mathematics, had been at the university less than three weeks when she was struck by the disease. Her parents, Gordon and Gill, from Ruislip, West London, attended the service at St Mary's, South Stoneham, Southampton; a student band, the Jazzmanics, which Melissa had joined, also performed.

Students called for a broad medical debate. "This is not something vice-chancellors can make an instant decision on. We must find out if inoculation is the most effective way of fighting the disease," a spokesman said.

The Meningitis Research Foundation says the disease is increasing in universities. Cases in the 15-24 age group have more than doubled since 1994. First-year students in

immunisation of 1,200 students last week.

The effectiveness of routine mass vaccination was questioned yesterday by scientists who monitor meningitis. Norman Begg, chairman of the Meningococcus Working Group, which reports to the Government, said the risk of catching meningitis remained extremely small and the current policy was adequate.

He said: "While there is evidence that first-year undergraduates have a slightly increased risk this does not mean that routine vaccinations would necessarily save lives. The vaccine does not offer full protection and takes 10 to 14 days to produce immunity. If all students were vaccinated on arrival this might well not prevent cases."

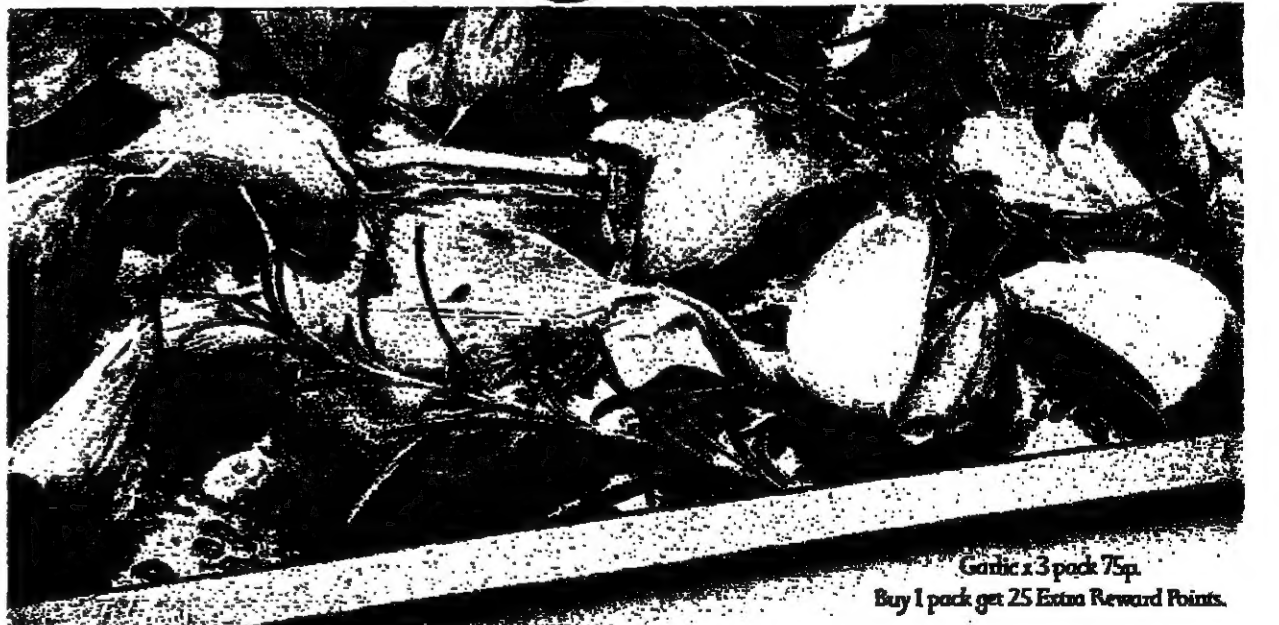
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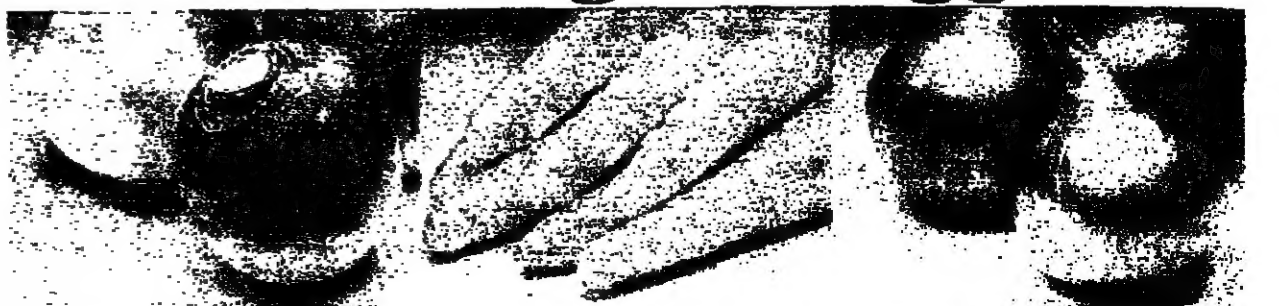


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## Parents win right to school of first choice

John O'Leary reports on a ruling that could open the floodgates

A GROUP of children whose parents waged a year-long legal battle to secure places at a local comprehensive celebrated victory yesterday in a case which may open the way for thousands of others to demand their first choice of school.

The seven children, aged 11 and 12, attended lessons at Old Hall School in Kimberworth, Rotherham, yesterday after almost two months of home tuition. Their local authority had refused them a place even after the High Court ruled that its action was unlawful.

Rotherham council insisted that the school was full and that the seven pupils lived outside its catchment area.

Their parents refused to accept defeat and clubbed together to seek legal advice.

The parents bought all the children school uniforms and textbooks and paid £120 a week for private tuition in mathematics, English and French. They took them to Old Hall in uniform every day to sign an attendance register before being turned away from the school.

When leave was granted to challenge the council's decision in the High Court last month, Mr Justice Collins backed the parents and ruled that the admissions policy was unlawful. He said that the catchment area policy negated the right of parents to choose



The seven pupils returning to Old Hall School in Kimberworth yesterday after Mr Justice Collins ruled that the council's admissions policy had been unlawful

where to send their children, because the school was already full before they were allowed to express their preference.

The authority relented only after the threat of an action for contempt of court. A council spokesman said: "After further discussion with the head

teacher, the education director has concluded that the admission of the seven children would not at this time be further prejudicial to the provision of efficient education at Old Hall."

Bill Bainbridge, the head teacher, said: "I'm pleased the matter has been resolved. The

children have not been in school for 7½ weeks and have a lot of work to catch up."

Mr Bainbridge said that the new entrants would put pressure on existing classes, which already had 30 pupils, leaving little capacity for any families moving into the catchment area. But he added: "The rest

of our children and parents can rest assured we will be working hard to make sure they are not disadvantaged in any way."

The parents have always argued that Old Hall was the nearest and best school to their homes in the West Hill area of Kimberworth. Dave

Manderson, whose daughter Kerry was among the children affected, said: "We live only 120 metres from the catchment boundary and other kids are bussed in from miles away. The admissions policy just doesn't make sense." Before going through the school gates, 11-year-old Kerry said:

"I'm really looking forward to meeting all my friends who I was with for seven years at primary school. "We've had lessons at home, so I'm not too worried about being behind the others. I can't wait to go in."

Testing toddlers, page 21

## Council rejects official plan to save education

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

AN EDUCATION authority that ministers have labelled the worst in Britain yesterday set itself on a collision course with the Government by rejecting emergency improvement plans.

The chief officers of Hackney Council, East London, dismissed the advice of a government-appointed "improvement team" as "fifth-rate management opportunism".

Their stance angered Stephen Byers, the School Standards Minister, but his office yesterday admitted that it was powerless to force the council to comply ahead of planned legislation next July.

Hackney, described by inspectors in September as out of control, has seven failing schools and has been unable to recruit an education officer for more than a year. The improvement team, invited in under pressure from the Government, wants the post upgraded and four more senior education posts created by November 13, so they can be filled by Christmas.

Tony Elliston, Hackney's

chief executive, advised councillors to throw out the plan at their education committee meeting tonight and give his own new management structure time to work. He said further changes would cost at least £200,000.

"We had a system that failed which is why we have put the new structure in place," Mr Elliston said. "The improvement team's proposals will do absolutely nothing to benefit Hackney's children."

Mr Byers urged the councillors to defy Mr Elliston. "The time has come for the children of Hackney to be put first," Mr Byers said.

The improvement team report concerns a lack of leadership. It is now for local councillors in Hackney to get behind the need for proper leadership in the borough's education service.

The Department for Education and Employment said there was no prospect of emergency legislation. The Education White Paper, expected to become law in July, would give the Government powers of intervention into local education authorities.

The four-strong improvement team was led by Richard Painter, the chairman of ADT, who led the "hit squad" that closed Britain's worst school, Hackney Downs, last year. Mr Painter has angered Hackney councillors by refusing to attend their meeting tonight.

The final decision is likely to be taken by the full council on November 13, when the 24 Official Labour members are likely to support the proposals. However, they are expected to face opposition from the 12 Conservatives, ten Liberal Democrats and 13 members of Hackney New Labour, a breakaway faction expelled from the national party.



Byers cannot force council to comply yet

## Drug-taking 'part of modern life'

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

DRUG-TAKING is no longer the hallmark of rebels, losers and couch potatoes but part of the consumer lifestyle enjoyed by young people, according to a report published today.

Most people aged 16-24 using drugs recreationally are sociable and sensible rather than deviant, the report says. It condemns conventional images of drug users and says they are highly knowledgeable about the substances they take and the role they play in their lives.

Drug-takers are no less moral than young people in general, the report, *The Substance of Youth*, published by the Joseph Rowntree Trust, says. "Most recreational drug-taking takes place as part of a

consumer lifestyle, not a deviant one."

The report says there is no overall drug culture in the UK and highlights differences across the country. In Wythenshawe, Manchester, taking drugs is a sign of conformity rather than rebellion while in fashionable circles of London and other major cities, drug-taking may be about innovation in style.

The study by the independent think-tank Demos warns the Government that it will make no progress in tackling drugs effectively until the conventional image of drug-takers is dispelled and says any "battle" against drugs will fail.

One of the authors of the report warned the Government of the danger of allowing Keith Hellawell, its new Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator, to be portrayed as someone at war with youth culture. Mr Hellawell welcomed the report as providing a further insight into the complexities of drug misuse amongst young people.

### CORRECTION

Mr Q.S. Anisuddin (letter, yesterday) is a former vice-chairman of the UK Immigrants Advisory Service, not the UK Immigration Service.



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## M&S to open 25 stores in high-street expansion

By FRASER NELSON

MARKS & SPENCER is to open 25 small-scale food stores in city centres as part of an aggressive expansion plan which will create up to 5,000 jobs and bring it into direct competition with Tesco's high-street Metro stores.

The company, which for the past ten years has seen its growth led by out-of-town supermarkets, will almost double the number of small-scale shops within the next three years in the £2.1 billion expansion programme.

Like Tesco, it has 35 food stores which open late to catch people doing top-up shopping on the way home. The stores are normally about 12,000 sq ft, are 95 per cent dedicated to food, and located in city centres rather than residential areas.

The competition will be most direct in Covent Garden, Central London, where Tesco opened its first Metro store eight years ago. M&S intends to move in next year, targeting the same market.

A Tesco spokeswoman said the company had been unaware of M&S's expansion plans, in which local stores will become the fastest-growing part of its business. M&S insisted that it was not changing its formula, and would open new out-of-town stores with the same enthusiasm.

In total, it is likely to add a further 60 stores to its 286 current outlets. Sir Richard Greenbury, the chairman, said it expected to create between 4,500 and 5,000 jobs over three years. After extensions to existing stores, its overall trading space will rise by 25 per cent.

The showpiece of the expansion will be a 200,000-sq-ft store in Manchester, which will be its largest shop in the world, replacing two temporary sites it has used since its main store in the city was closed by an IRA bomb.

The company started life as a market clothing stall in Leeds when Michael Marks, a Russian refugee, set up business with Tom Spencer, a local cashier, in 1894.

## 'Food deserts' threaten health of poor and old

Minister is to tackle shortage of fresh produce for those stuck in inner cities and villages, writes Valerie Elliott

and villages, writes Valerie Elliott

POCKETS of inner-city and rural Britain have become "food deserts" threatening the health of the poor and elderly, says the Government. Now ministers are looking at ways to improve nutrition levels.

More and more households are without easy access to shops selling fresh food. In the cities, "food deserts" are found in areas where a fall in population has pitched local shops into decline and a doomed struggle against supermarkets. Only corner shops remain, selling a limited and overpriced range of packaged foods.

In the country, the closure of hundreds of village shops has left people without cars facing enormous difficulties. "The problem is worst for the elderly, the housebound and the poor."

Ministers alarmed by the scale of the problem are examining a range of policy options to limit the damage to health, including a review of planning rules to attract retailers to deprived urban areas, outlying housing estates and remote areas.

Other ideas include helping

communities to establish food co-operatives; encouraging supermarkets over home delivery services; forging partnerships between the Government and retailers; and examining the prospects for tele-shopping on the Internet at community centres.

Tessa Jowell, Minister for Public Health, said: "Food deserts are a real problem and they give rise to other conditions. If you can't get the right food, people eat fast food and convenience food and often they may be chronically deficient in essential nutrients."

Ms Jowell said the issues would be addressed in the consultative Green Paper *Our Healthier Nation*, to be published before Christmas.

Department of Health officials are also to start mapping the food deserts throughout the country. While most are expected to be inner-city pockets, some market towns and

outlying rural villages and hamlets will also be included.

Food deserts are likely to be one of the first issues to be examined by the social exclusion unit in the Cabinet office. The differences between food distribution across the country is also expected to be examined by the proposed new Food Standards Agency.

Miss Jowell is to meet big retailers shortly to discuss the problems and to look at the possibility of new partnerships with them. She is impressed by schemes such as the one run by Tesco, which has an arrangement with councils in Ealing, West London, and Leeds to deliver food to the elderly, infirm and housebound. It also runs 100 free buses to their supermarkets at a cost of £3 million a year.

Miss Jowell wants health authorities and local councils to consider nutrition when they draw up health action plans. She also suggests there could be a role for the proposed new healthy-living centres in helping certain groups of the population to have access to good food.

Miss Jowell accepted the need to strike a balance between local shops and supermarkets. "On the one hand you don't want to drive corner shops out of business, but it is vitally important for people to have access to fresh food. We are enormously concerned about the effect on public health."

"There is no point people knowing how to eat in a healthy way if they physically cannot get to a shop with the fresh food. Virtually every major illness is related to social class and we really need to ensure that good eating habits are established in childhood. We know that coronary heart disease, or predisposition to it, for example, needs to be addressed in childhood."

### RURAL DELIVERIES AND DIET TIPS

FRESH food can be scarce in the remote countryside. In Devon the Soil Association has set up food deliveries for the poor, elderly and housebound where village shops have closed and transport is poor.

People can order fresh fruit and vegetables from ten organic farms for delivery directly to the door or to a collection point. Some farms will include fresh meat.

The projects help people in villages and farms near Barnstaple and Bideford, around Princetown on Dartmoor, and near Totnes and Kingsbridge in south Devon. There are the usual health problems connected with failure to eat a nutritious diet. Isolation

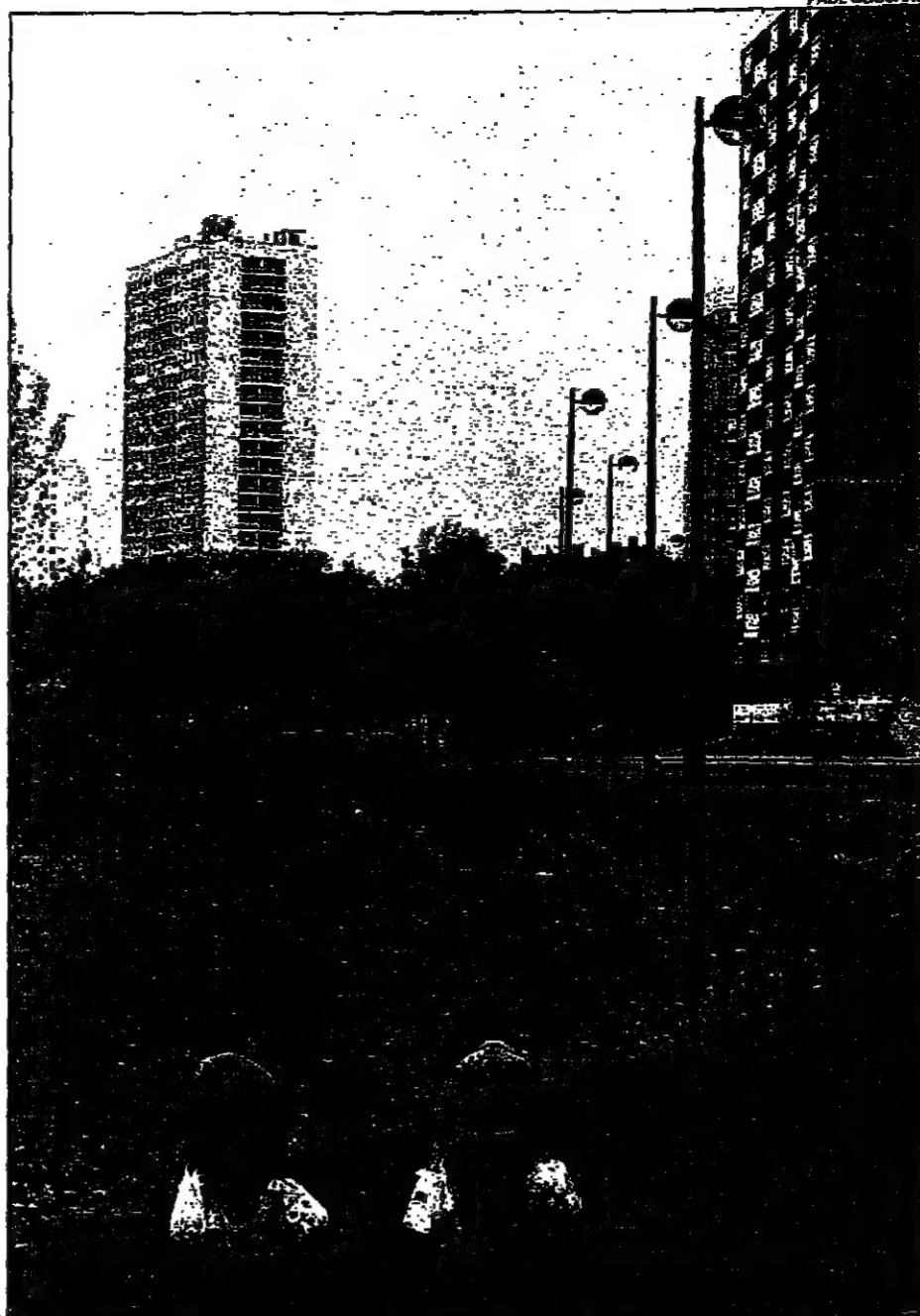
also brings high levels of suicide.

In the fenlands south of Downham Market and Swaffham in Norfolk, the health authority is setting up centres for producers to sell their goods, and encouraging people to grow vegetables.

Many villages have lost their shops, and it is difficult to keep food fresh between weekly shopping trips to town.

Families were asked to keep food diaries. Many relied largely on convenience foods.

Many young mothers did not know how to cook fresh ingredients. A college in Norwich ran cookery courses and produced a book of economical, nutritious recipes.



Shoppers face long walks, two buses or £5 taxi rides to reach a supermarket

## Where fresh fruit and veg are a two-mile walk away

WEST EVERTON, one inner-city area identified as a food desert, has seen massive depopulation in recent years. Sixty-five per cent of inhabitants have moved away since 1993 and new shops are not viable; one supermarket that did set up is now a bingo hall.

For a population of 6,000 there is one general store, but people have to travel, and usually walk, nearly two miles to a supermarket. Some 93 per cent of the people in West Everton, Liverpool, live in rented accommodation, 67 per cent of households have

no adult in work and 86 per cent of residents do not have access to a car — one of the lowest levels of car ownership in Europe.

There are bus services, but most do not link directly to the supermarkets and people often have to change twice to reach a large store offering a full range of fresh produce. Two of the nearest stores concentrate on freezer products and tinned food.

The area is blighted by ill-health. Some 40 per cent of residents have a long-term illness, and one in five children

is affected by wheezing. Everton also has a standard mortality rate higher than any other part of Liverpool. The level is assessed at 170, where a standard index would be 100. Most deaths are caused by stroke, cancer or heart disease.

Save the Children Fund has set up a programme in the area to help children. Clare Mahoney, the project's coordinator, said: "There is chronic illness in this area and people find it very difficult to get hold of fresh fruit and vegetables."

## Pensioner jailed over birds that flocked to her garden

A PENSIONER has been jailed for three months for feeding birds and animals in her garden.

Barbara Simpson, 60, was committed to prison for flouting council injunctions not to put out food on her 24-sq-ft bird table. She was appearing at Winchester Crown Court for the fifth time this year since Weymouth and Portland Borough Council was granted the injunction. Mrs Simpson, of Preston, Dorset, admitted breaking the injunction more than 20 times.

Purva Punwar, for Mrs Simpson, said: "The reason she broke the order was quite simply, try as she might, she couldn't bear to see the birds she has grown to love over the years starve."

He said that Mrs Simpson had no children and very few interests in life apart from caring for birds and animals. Mr Punwar said that Mrs Simpson had previously been spending £150 a week on bird food. But since the final order she had been spending only £32 a week — principally for her 30 white fan-tailed doves.

The council had sought the court order after neighbours complained that thousands of rooks, pigeons and starlings would gather in nearby trees, waking them at 5am. They also claimed that the birds soiled their washing and windows and that leftover food attracted rats.

The court was told that at times the bird food in Mrs Simpson's garden and on the verge outside had been a foot high. Mrs Simpson had claimed that local council photographs of piles of food were faked and her neighbours had lied in evidence.

Mr Punwar said the court should seek a long-term solution to the problem and allow Mrs Simpson to undergo psychiatric treatment and perhaps fine her for the breaches.

Sentencing her, Judge Roger Tiberidge said: "It is a sad duty I have to perform on a 60-year-old woman with an unblemished character. But she is quite unable to stop actions that involve contempt of court — but, more importantly, involve serious risk to the health of others."

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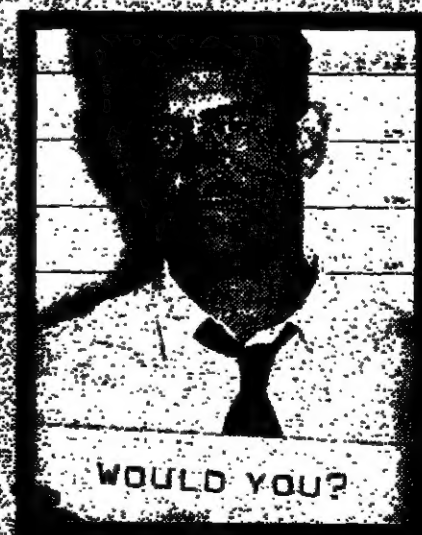
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## EU to make firms consult workers on business plans

THE European Commission will prepare the way today for a new law under the social chapter that would require all but the smallest firms to consult their employees on future policy and would render void any sackings without such action.

The move, which would greatly extend an existing law that covers large multinational companies, is aimed at bringing Britain and Ireland into line with continental practice which requires firms to operate works councils.

The Government has criticised the idea as an unnecessary burden on business but, under the social chapter, which Britain is joining in the Treaty of Amsterdam, any opposition could be overruled by a majority vote.

The Commission's decision comes as ministers meet in Brussels today to prepare for the European Union "jobs summit" later this month at which Britain will press for easing the burden of regulations on employers. Tony Blair has been urging EU leaders to refrain from using the social chapter to pass new laws that could inflict more red tape on business.

Britain has already signed up to laws on parental leave, the rights of part-time workers and shifting the burden of proof in sexual discrimination cases. The proposed law on consultation will test the Government's commitment to improved workers' rights against the potentially conflicting drive for more flexible labour regulation.

Under the rules of the social chapter, the Commission will give EU employers' organisations and unions six weeks to decide whether to negotiate their own version of a consultation law. Failing this, Padraig Flynn, the Social Affairs Commissioner, will submit a draft law for the member states to enact.

In an initial discussion this

**New law under social chapter would require agreement on sackings, writes Charles Bremner**

summer, employers resisted the scheme and unions favoured it. Two pieces of legislation have already been enacted through agreement between the social partners, as the employers and unions are called.

British officials said yesterday that Government favoured such negotiations as the best route for drafting the proposed consultation law. However, when the idea was first mooted last June, Downing Street said: "We are not in favour of new regulation in this area."

The legislation is intended to curb "social dumping", in which "companies shop around for places that have low requirements in industrial relations", an EU official said.

Britain, with its low employment costs, is deemed on the Continent to be the worst "offender".

A commission document released today says the proposed law would provide equal treatment for all workers across the EU "to avoid discrimination and to ensure greater compatibility between national provisions".

It must enshrine "the right of workers to be informed and consulted... on the economic situation and the future outlook of the company and on any decisions likely to affect them".

This is intended to benefit workers and companies by improving morale and helping staff to adapt to rapidly changing conditions.

Mr Flynn wants the law to have teeth in the form of penalties against firms that flout the legal obligation to consult.

Public pressure on the Commission for such action has come from highly publicised cases of factory closure, notably a decision by the vehicle manufacturer Renault to sack 2,000 workers at its plant in Brussels earlier this year.

The main proposed penalty would be to annul dismissal notices or any other decisions affecting the conditions of employment.

The Commission is not formally setting the size of company that will come under the law, but Mr Flynn has cited a minimum of 50 employees as a desirable target.

Under the existing multinational law, which is deemed by many British companies to have been beneficial, only firms employing at least 2,000 workers in two or more member states are required to set up works councils.

The Commission insists that the new scheme should allow for a less formal structure than works councils.

George Soros, page 22  
Letters, page 23



Flynn will submit a draft law if necessary



Tony Blair accepting a poppy from his wife, Cherie, yesterday. The Royal British Legion delivers a supply of poppies every year to 10 Downing Street, for use by visitors and staff, and the Prime Minister traditionally buys the first one

## MPs' insults undermine all politicians, Nolan warns

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT  
WHITEHALL EDITOR

MPs are helping to reduce confidence in politicians by constantly insulting each other, Lord Nolan, the public standards watchdog, will say tonight in a warning on the dangers of cynicism.

Delivering the Richard Dimbleby Lecture, to be televised on BBC1, he is also expected to criticise members of the public who accept and enjoy any bad thing they hear about others, and blames the press for its part in promoting the growth of cynicism.

While he accepts that the exchanges of insults by politicians is part of the democratic process, he believes that "constant and sometimes irresponsible blackguarding of each other, especially at election times" is partly to blame for declining public confidence in those in public life.

When they accuse each other of dishonesty the public can be forgiven if they take the accusations at face value. After all, the politicians should know.

He staunchly defends a free press, however, and the contribution that newspapers had made to expose wrongdoing. Newspaper editors do not share the public's low opinion of politicians, he points out.

Lord Nolan, who steps down as the chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life this week, will stress that the public perception of sleaze runs far ahead of the reality, but he believes the jury is still out on Parliament's self-regulatory role and the success of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, Sir Gordon Downey.

He will point out that the House of Commons itself made its own rules for the procedures of the new Commissioner, and will make clear that the issues will be reconsidered by the committee under its new chairman, Sir



Nolan spoke about the dangers of cynicism

Patrick Neill, QC. Lord Nolan hopes that the committee will be given a role in monitoring the constitutional changes such as the Scottish parliament, the Welsh assembly, the Greater London authority and reform of the House of Lords.

He will also highlight the need for tougher procedures on whistle-blowing in public life, and emphasise that democracy works in Britain because its actions are monitored by independent institutions and individuals: "It is underpinned by the integrity and political neutrality of the Civil Service, the judges, the Armed Forces and police."

Members of all these institutions must be prepared to protest against the misuse of power, he believes. While judges were well-placed for this, because they have job security, he recognises that it takes more courage for junior officials or junior police officers to speak up against perceived improper behaviour of their superiors.

"Yet, without their willingness to do so, possibly at great expense to the wellbeing of themselves and their families, great wrongs may be perpetrated and remain undetected."

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# Sleaze has little effect on voters' view of Labour

BY MAGNUS LINKLATER

## PAISLEY SOUTH

IT IS NOT too hard to predict the result of tomorrow's by-election in Paisley South. Barring anything unforeseen — and Labour has spent most of its time ensuring that the very word is removed from the lexicon — Douglas Alexander, a 30-year-old Edinburgh solicitor and sometime speechwriter to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, will be elected MP for this solid Labour seat.

Despite predictions of bitterness and rancour, it has been a surprisingly bland campaign. Mr Alexander seems to have been broadly accepted by the electorate as their apparent Gordon McMaster, whose suicide prompted the by-election. This is despite his relative youth, the fact that he seems the antithesis of the tough, West Coast Labour archetype, and that Edinburgh solicitors are not everyone's cup of tea in Paisley. "He's a lovely young man," said one Paisley matron, "very young, mind you, but lovely." In fact 30 is not all that young. It's just that Mr Alexander looks more like 19.

That is about all anyone can say about him thus far, since he has been kept well away from the usual round of daily press conferences. His is the face that appeared occasionally alongside Mr Brown in those fly-on-the-wall television documentaries about life at

the Treasury. He didn't say much then. He's not saying much now. "Where's Dougie?" has been the theme cry of the campaign as his opponents try to pick a fight. "A cut-out candidate," stormed one. "Running scared," said another. To no avail.

Labour's policy is clear: keep the temperature down, steer away from trouble and wait for Mr McMaster's 12,750 majority to be repeated on November 6. While all the other party leaders have been to Paisley, there has been no sign of Tony Blair.

The very fact of the Prime Minister's absence, as Sherlock Holmes might have said, is the curious thing about this campaign. The other curious thing is that sleaze, which everyone predicted would turn the by-election into as ferocious an affair as Tanton or Putney, has simply failed to ignite. Despite the best endeavours of Mr Alexander's opponents, the very word has seemed to lose its impact. It is as if its repetition has dulled the senses, and certainly the interest, of the voters. The SNP's Ian Blackford, by far the most impressive of the other candidates, has placed it at the top of the agenda and has pointed out that Labour's inaction in the past had

allowed it to flourish. He may well make inroads in the Labour vote, but not enough to overturn a seat as safe as this.

And yet Paisley was where Labour's image seemed most tainted. After McMaster's death, lurid allegations gathered about the nature of local politics in the area. The neighbouring MP for Renfrewshire West, Tommy Graham, named in McMaster's suicide note, was said to have spread damaging rumours about him, and was suspended by the party. Mr Graham's election agent, Harry Revie, was accused of using threats and intimidation. A general sense of corruption became almost synonymous with the name of Paisley.

Mr Alexander insists that his party takes sleaze seriously. Yesterday, in a quiet masterstroke, the party announced that Mr Revie was being stripped of various offices, including his convener-ship of the property committee on Renfrewshire Council. If, tomorrow, the voters of Paisley do wonder whether Labour is capable of cleaning up its act, that could help them to make up their minds. But maybe they will simply go for "the lovely young man".

General election result: G. McMaster (Lab) 21,482; W. Maird (SNP) 8,732; E. McCartin (LD) 3,500; R. Reid (C) 3,237. Lab majority 12,750.



Campaigning on the streets of the Beckenham constituency yesterday: the Conservatives' Jacqui Lait, left, and Labour's Bob Hughes

## Tory running on a lukewarm formula

BY NICHOLAS WATT  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

### BECKENHAM

THE Tories should coast to victory in Beckenham, where comfortable London commuters have ensured victory for the party at every election since the seat was created in 1948. But two bugbears which led to the Tories' national defeat on May 1 — sleaze and Europe — have returned to haunt their by-election campaign.

Jacqui Lait, the pro-European who is standing for the Tories, has been forced to cobble together an uncertain formula to show her lukewarm support for William Hague's hard-line stance on the single currency. Yesterday she professed herself to "be at

case" with Mr Hague's decision to rule out membership for ten years.

Mrs Lait, 49, made history in 1996 by becoming the first Tory woman whip, and is a former parliamentary private secretary to Mr Hague, but lost her Hastings and Rye seat on May 1. She said: "I am a Euro enthusiast, but I have always been sceptical about the single currency."

Mrs Lait is also having to cope with local anger over the behaviour of Piers Merchant, who resigned the seat last month after an affair with a teenage nightclub hostess. Mrs Lait insisted that voters had drawn a line under Mr

Merchant's behaviour, but some die-hard Tories are still smarting. John Cranston, 54, who owns a vegetable shop in Pease High Street, said: "I have voted Tory all my life, but I may vote Labour this time. You should not lie through your teeth. Lying is the lowest of the lowest."

Labour is relishing Mrs Lait's difficulties, which are overshadowing her campaign ahead of the by-election on November 20. Mr Merchant held the seat at the General Election, although there was a swing of 15 per cent to Labour. Gavin Strang, the Transport Minister who campaigned in the by-election yesterday, said that Labour now stands a "fighting chance" of winning. Bob Hughes, 39,

the Labour candidate, said that the success of the Government would attract voters from traditionally Tory-voting wards near Bromley, and that Conservatives should not underestimate the strength of the Labour vote in Pease, which has some of the most deprived housing estates in London.

Mr Hughes, who concentrated his campaign in Pease yesterday, said: "The perception of Beckenham as leafy Tory territory is wrong." Rosemary Vetterlein, who was third in the general election, is standing again for the Liberal Democrats.

General election result: P. Merchant (C) 23,084; R. Hughes (Lab) 18,131; R. Vetterlein (LD) 9,858. Tory majority: 4,953

## 'Sour grapes' could still yield good Conservative vintage

JAMES LANDALE

"IT'S NOT a fix-up, I swear," said Mark Oaten, the Liberal Democrat candidate for the Winchester by-election. Out canvassing with *The Times* yesterday morning, the former MP who won the Hampshire seat by two votes in May, had just been hooted by three drivers who slowed down to give him the thumbs up. Similarly, nearly all the local

people he had visited, from old folk to young students, had expressed their support for the Lib Dems.

Almost embarrassed at this demonstration of popular support, Mr Oaten insisted: "We've still got a lot of work to do. We cannot be complacent." The Liberal Democrats are desperate to paint the November 20 poll as a very close two-horse race with the Tories.

Nominations close this af-

### WINCHESTER

ternoon for the by-election which was called after the High Court declared the general election result void. Ballot paper irregularities showed that Gerald Malone, the sitting Tory MP, would have won by two votes if some incorrectly stamped papers had been counted.

The Lib Dems believe the

closeness of the May result will persuade people to vote tactically against the Tories. They hope particularly to squeeze a few votes from the 6,000 people who backed Labour in May.

Labour is countering this threat by talking up the Liberal Democrat's chances. They claim their private polling figures show Mr Oaten winning with a 3,000-vote majority. This, they hope,

will stop too many Labour voters feeling any need to shift their support to the Liberal Democrats.

Patrick Davies, the Labour candidate, said: "If the Tories had any chance of winning Winchester, would they have held Beckenham on the same day?"

The Liberal Democrats are also fighting to keep on board disillusioned Tories who backed them in May, and a

straw poll on the streets yesterday indicated they might succeed. Richard Knowles, 37, a businessman, voiced a popular sentiment: "There is a strong element of sour grapes about his refusal to accept the general election result."

One Tory voter who refused to be named added: "He should have just accepted the umpire's decision."

Despite this, Mr Malone was yesterday in a confident

mood. He believes his support for William Hague's tough line on a single currency will help woo back Tory voters.

But with odds of 6-5 on both Lib Dems and Tories, local bookies, like most people in Winchester, still believe that the election is still too close to call.

General election result: M. Oaten (LD) 26,100; G. Malone (C) 26,098; P. Davies (Lab) 6,528. Lib Dem majority 2.



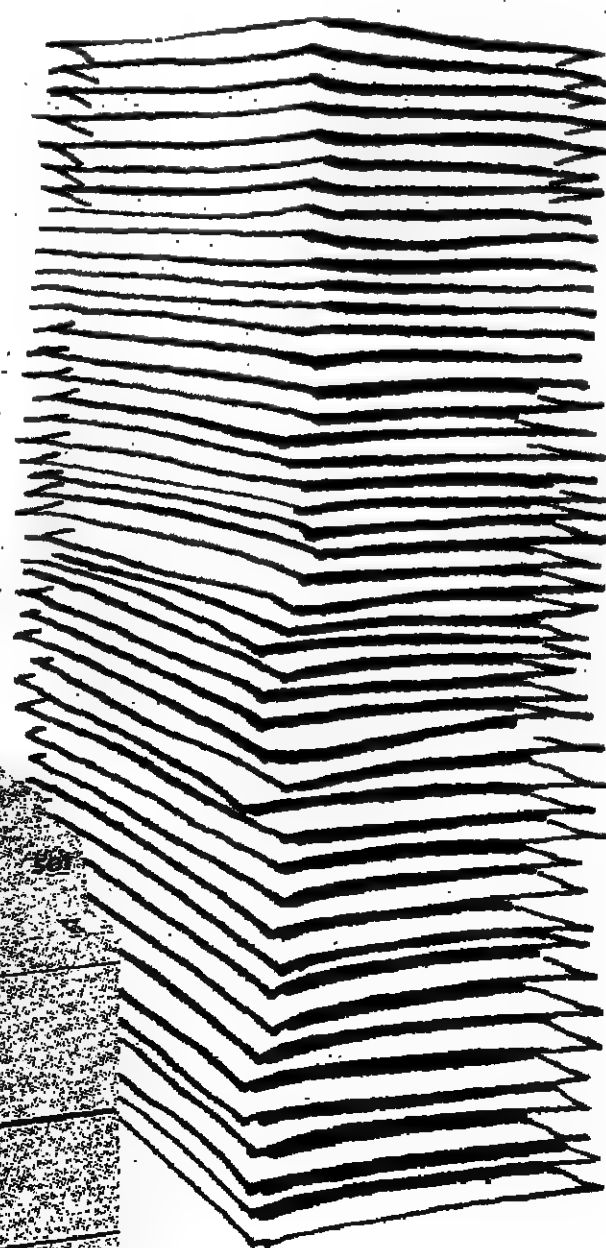
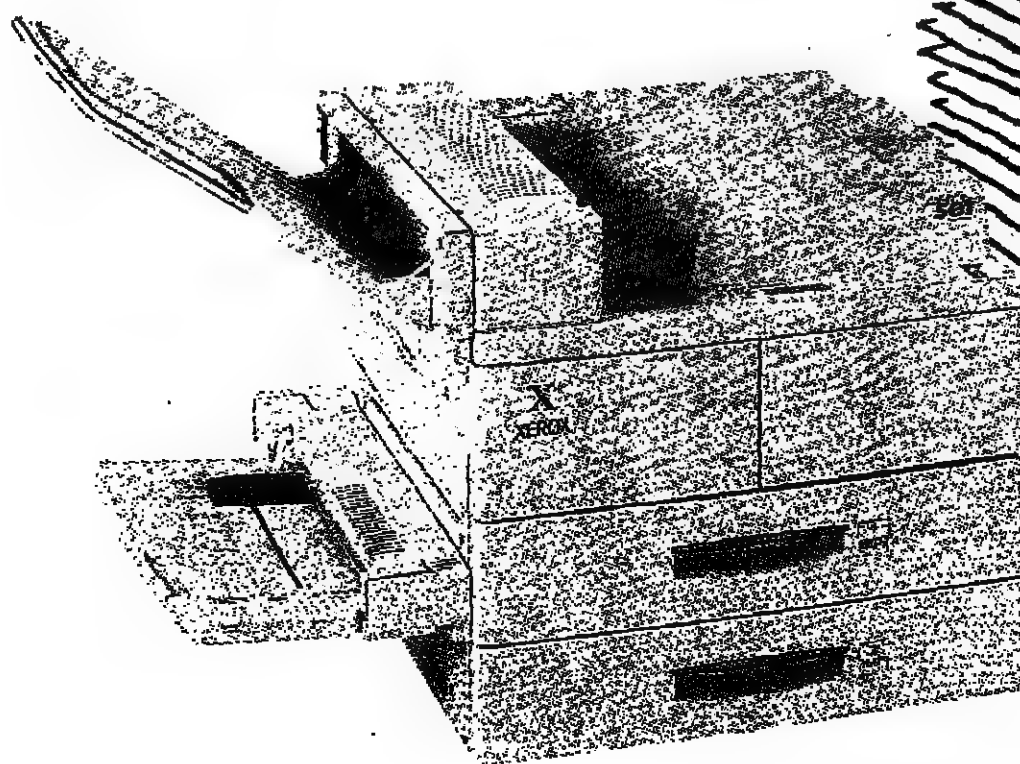
Mark Oaten: popular but not complacent

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## Free our drivers, Blair tells Jospin

TONY BLAIR yesterday urged Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister, to take swift action to help British lorry drivers stranded by the worsening drivers' strike in France, as violence erupted near the port of Boulogne when British drivers broke through a strike blockade.

In a 15-minute telephone conversation described as "robust", Mr Blair warned his French counterpart that the plight of the Britons would be raised at the Anglo-French summit tomorrow and Friday unless the dispute was resolved quickly.

Mr Blair reminded the French Prime Minister that compensation owed to British lorry drivers after last year's strike remains largely unpaid. He said that France should intervene immediately to help British drivers stranded by the dispute, a Downing Street official said. "The French au-

British Prime Minister urges Paris to intervene immediately in the lorry strike, writes Ben Macintyre

thorities have a duty to help them move on," he said.

M Jospin assured the Prime Minister that his Government was doing its best to bring the strike to an end, but despite increasing calls from France's neighbours for direct government action the French Transport Ministry said that establishing "transit corridors" to allow foreign lorries to move freely through France would be "inappropriate".

Neil Kinnock, the European Transport Commissioner, described the strike as deplorable, and his spokeswoman said that legal moves against France for failing to ensure the free movement of goods were

being considered. French Transport Ministry officials said that policing transit corridors for foreign lorry drivers would be virtually impossible and could provoke the strikers to far more radical action. They said that rekindling the dialogue between drivers and employers was the only way to defuse the crisis.

But negotiations over ending the strike were moving sluggishly. Another round of negotiations between union leaders and haulage bosses lasted just two hours. No date has been set for a resumption of talks, union official said. The largest employers' group, the UFT, which represents

more than four fifths of haulage firms, has not yet returned to negotiations, but an official said the group may return to talks today.

Renault, the French car-maker, stopped production at two factories yesterday as the strike began to bite. It said it was laying off workers at assembly plants in Douai and Le Havre after deliveries of spare parts were held up by the strikers.

The number of illegal blockades rose to more than 160 yesterday as strikers demanding higher pay and improved working conditions dug in for a long campaign.

On Monday night Jean-Claude Gissot, the Transport Minister and one of three Communists in the Cabinet, visited a barricade in Le Mans to hear strikers' grievances at first hand.

The economic effects of the strike are becoming apparent. All but one of France's 13 main oil refineries have been sealed off and Calais and Le Havre ports remained closed to freight.

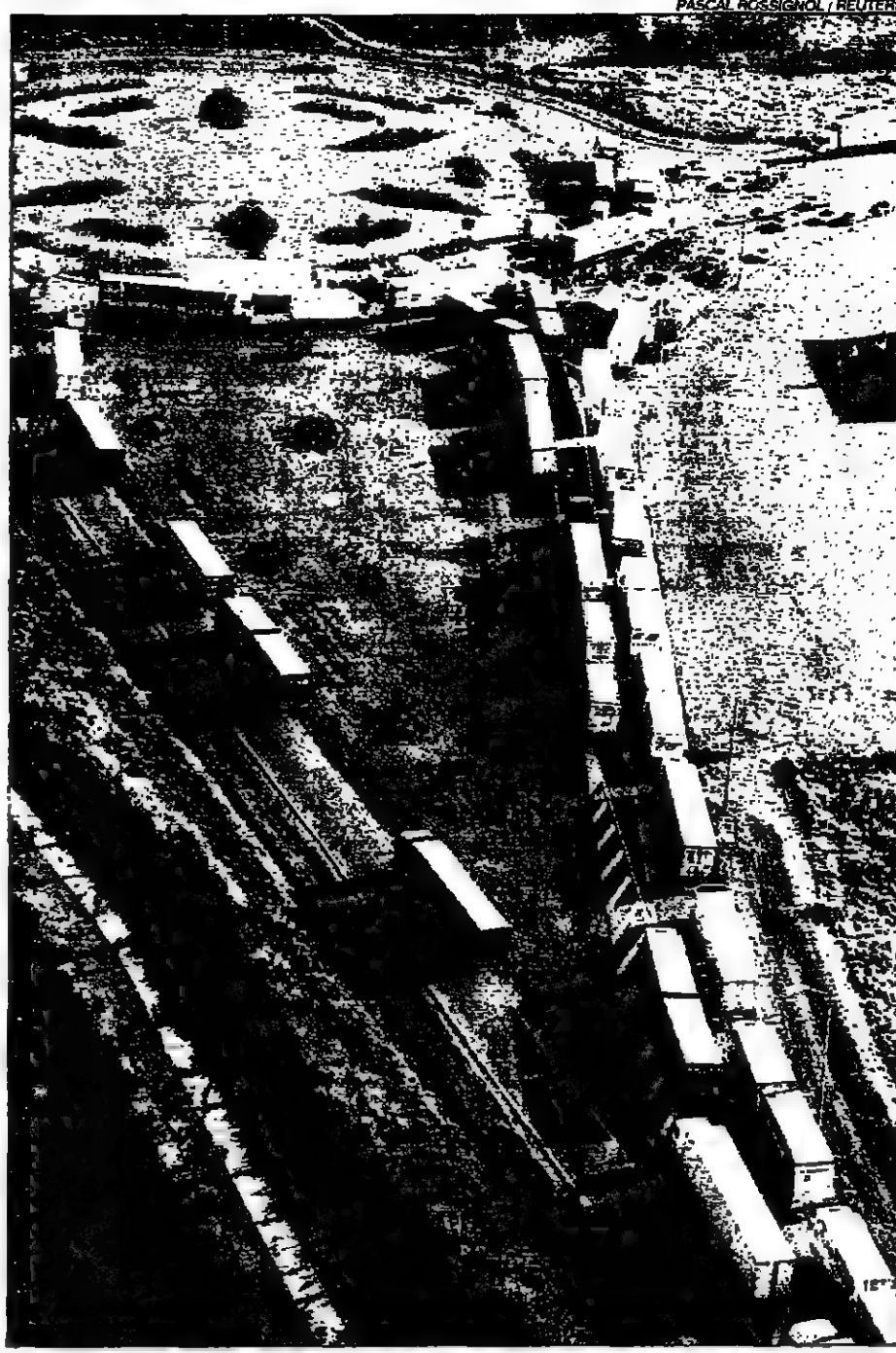
Spanish agriculture associations, threatening a boycott of French goods, estimated that the strike could cost Spanish fruit and vegetable producers more than £100 million.

With fuel stocks dwindling, several regional authorities in France requisitioned petrol stations for the use of emergency vehicles and rationing was imposed in many others. Motorists queued for hours to obtain a maximum of £15 worth of petrol.

Panic buying was reported in many parts of France and supermarkets said there could be serious shortages by the end of the week.

Oasis, the rock band, cancelled a concert that had been due to take place in Paris last night after their equipment was trapped by a roadblock in northern France.

Police have been reopening some key border crossings and intervening to break up fights, but the Government has made no move to break the strike by force.



Striking lorry drivers block the A22 Lille-Ghent autoroute yesterday at Roncoq

## Irish lorry attacked as it rams blockade

VIOLENT scenes erupted near Lille last night as a frustrated lorry driver tried to ram his vehicle through barricades put up by striking French drivers.

As an Irish driver, who had been halted for 12 hours by more than 200 French lorries, drove through the barriers, French pickets tried to smash his windscreen, and he drove at the crowd, injuring a union leader. Pickets then tried to block his escape route with a van, but he refused to stop and hit the front of the oncoming vehicle.

An angry mob surrounded the cab of the halted lorry, and the driver locked his doors. Union organisers pushed the mob away, insisting that they did not want any violence.

Brian Finch, 61, from Bromsgrove in Worcestershire, who saw the incident, said the driver arrived at the blockade at midnight after delivering his load and was returning with an empty lorry to Kilkenny.

"At first he seemed philosophical about it all, but he returned to his lorry after lunch and seemed very frustrated at the continued delay," Mr Finch said.

Police were called to the scene and the unidentified Irishman was arrested and questioned for more than an hour at the scene, before being escorted away in his lorry with a heavy police guard.

The injured union leader was taken to hospital in Lille, but released after receiving stitches in a head wound.

## Channel port queues force English motorway closure

BY ADRIAN LEE IN CALAIS AND KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE French lorry strike began to make itself felt in Britain yesterday with the closure of a section of motorway to accommodate queuing lorries waiting to get to the Continent.

With drivers now facing delays of up to ten hours to cross the Channel, Kent police were forced to implement Operation Stack on the M20, closing two junctions to create a filter system for drivers waiting to enter Dover. More junctions of the M20 are likely to be closed off in the next few days if the strike continues.

British lorries came under attack yesterday when a convoy of British drivers ran a blockade near Boulogne after being trapped for two nights. French strikers were accused of trying to disconnect air

brakes on the 38-tonne vehicles and of causing minor damage to one lorry.

The leading three drivers, Steve Durbin, Les Reagan and Russell Forrest, said they saw a gap when spikes were removed to allow a French lorry through. "We just decided to go for it," said Mr Forrest, who was attempting to reach Valencia in Spain. "As I gathered speed, one man tried to grab the airline to lock the brakes."

Mr Reagan, 42, who was travelling to Lyons, said: "I just decided to keep going after my two mates. There were about 15 French drivers and by that time they all realised what was going on and were all shouting. One went for the brake line and kicked out at my lorry."

Two other drivers, Perry

Newell, 32, of Hampton, Middlesex, and Pete Barr, 39, of Ashted, Surrey, decided not to try to get through. They were later allowed to go when the French moved the barricade. The strikers' tactics in northern France appeared to involve setting up blockades for a few hours and allowing long queues to build up.

The Channel Tunnel was targeted for the first time when drivers placed spikes on the road to the departure terminal at 11.25am. Police gave them an ultimatum to move within two hours and, with two busloads of riot police standing by, the blockade was removed 90 minutes later.

The Road Haulage Association said yesterday that there were now up to 150 blockades throughout France.

## Brussels admits it is powerless to act

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS

GOVERNMENTS and companies across Europe yesterday deluged the European Commission with demands for action against the strike, but the Brussels executive conceded that it had little power to intervene.

"The phones have been red hot all morning," said the spokeswoman for Neil Kinnock, the Transport Commissioner. The Commission backed a call from the

Dutch and Irish to hold an emergency council of transport ministers. Such a session could only be convened by Luxembourg, the current holder of the EU presidency, and it was unclear what results could be achieved.

Germany joined the chorus of complaints with a call to France to respect its obligations to its partners. Denmark is pressing the EU to ensure the passage of vehicles in transit, but officials said there were no means to compel France to obey. Mr Kinnock issued a fresh warning to

France that it could face legal action for breaching the rules of the single market, but his staff watered this down, saying such a move was a distant last resort. "Taking legal action against a member state is a very, very serious endeavour," said Mr Kinnock's spokeswoman.

The Commission also said it had no powers to force France to pay compensation. Last week Britain reminded the French that only a handful of cases from last year's strike had been compensated and demanded faster action this time.

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N24/32 TIMES











# Conscience of Delhi stirs over animals' burden

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

THE Indian Government is showing signs of bowing to the concerns of animal rights activists, in a country where large parts of the economy depend on overworked beasts of burden.

The bullock, vital to small farmers, is perhaps the most routinely tortured species. Owners inflict pain to force bullocks to haul huge loads; some use chili powder on sensitive parts of the body to make them work harder.

Most of the animals are sent to slaughterhouses while still young because they quickly become too weak to work. There are an estimated 15 million working bullocks in India, and most suffer damaged necks—the usual reason for premature retirement—from hauling excessive loads.

The owners say their animals have to carry large loads to compete with lorries. They

usually buy frail animals cheaply from auctions and work them until they drop. The law, never enforced, provides for a fine of 100 rupees (£1.75) for beating, ill-treating or torturing an animal. The practice of castrating bullocks by tying them by all four legs and smashing their genitals with a rod is commonplace.

However, the Government is tackling one of the most familiar and disturbing images of urban India: caged and often dying birds being carried around on the backs of bicycles by hawkers. India has reinforced a ban on bird trapping to save hundreds of exotic species from one of the country's cruellest and oldest traditions.

The trade is pursued mostly by tribal Indians, whose collective knowledge of breeds, habitat and migration habits of colourful birds is almost

unequalled. They use the same trapping techniques devised centuries ago, often involving nothing more than string and a noose. Perhaps 30,000 people depend on the trade.

Effective controls over cruelty to animals are scarce in a country where there is so much cruelty to humans, especially to hundreds of thousands of children producing fireworks, cigarettes, matches, carpets, glass and other goods. But animal welfare is creeping on to the political agenda and the effort to control bird trafficking promises to be one of the most effective moves against animal torture.

The Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 was reinforced in 1990 to control the export of live birds; recent provisions have extended the law to local trading in live birds. The main domestic traders are pet-shop owners. Middlemen seek exotic



A bullock drawing a dhai in Delhi. The animals are routinely mistreated by their impoverished owners.

birds for foreign buyers. The export ban is reasonably easy to enforce because of the visibility of the trade. But customs inspectors are sometimes bribed and bird sellers continue to operate openly in

most Indian cities. The birds are kept in tiny cages and die if they are not quickly sold.

Perhaps the most fortunate animals in India are cows, hundreds of thousands of which wander the streets,

devouring leftovers from homes and vegetable markets. Many are diseased, however. Until a few years ago cow-catchers in Delhi used to remove the animals and put them into compounds, but the

practice was halted when Hindu religious leaders protested. Packs of stray dogs, now protected against capture and slaughter despite the threat of rabies, add to Delhi's burgeoning animal population.

## Argentine President is invited to Britain

By MICHAEL BRYNOR  
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Government invited President Menem of Argentina yesterday to pay an official visit to Britain in recognition of burgeoning trade and political relations and his efforts to improve relations since the Falklands war.

No date was set, but in talks yesterday between Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and Guido di Tella, the Argentine Foreign Minister, it was suggested that Señor Menem might come in the second half of next year. His term of office expires in 1999 and he is constitutionally barred from running again.

An invitation was extended originally by John Major at the United Nations in September 1995, when Britain signed a new oil agreement on underwater exploration around the Falklands.

The invitation was then put on hold because the Conservatives did not want possible controversy over the islands to surface before the general election.

### WORLD IN BRIEF

## 4,000 feared dead in Vietnam storm

Hanoi: At least 132 people were killed and up to 4,000, most of them fishermen, were missing after a typhoon hit Vietnam's southern coast.

Thousands were left homeless by Typhoon Linda, which destroyed buildings, roads, bridges and dykes at the weekend before heading west to the southern coast of Thailand. Thai government officials said Linda killed two people and injured two on Monday night as it moved towards Bangkok, but it lost some of its power and was downgraded to a tropical storm. About 1,300 boats foundered and a further 1,500 disappeared. At least three fishermen would have been on board each of the boats that have disappeared. (Reuters)

## Floods sweep East Africa

Nairobi: Floods and rain across the eastern highlands of Ethiopia, southern Somalia and northern Kenya have killed dozens of people and displaced thousands of others, aid agencies reported. They said torrential storms and floods blamed on the El Nino phenomenon have washed away roads, affecting countries up and down East Africa in the past ten days, and feared there could be worse to come. "If the rains continue to be as heavy as they have been in the past week, we could be looking at a major crisis," said Burk Oberle, Somalia director of the United Nations World Food Programme. (AFP)

## Plea by backpacker killer

Sydney: Ivan Milat, right, the Australian jailed last year for life for the murder of seven backpackers, including two British women, appealed against his conviction in person yesterday (Roger Maynard writes). Milat, 53, told three judges in Sydney that his case had been prejudiced by pre-trial publicity. He argued that evidence given by Paul Orions, a British tourist attacked by a man fitting Milat's description, had been misrepresented in the judge's summing-up.



## US hardens Sudan sanctions

Washington: Citing Sudan's support for terrorism, the United States is imposing severe economic sanctions that include a ban on bank loans and seizure of Sudanese assets in the United States. President Clinton signed an executive order also barring the shipment of American technology to Sudan and the importation of its goods. Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, said: "We take these steps because the Government of Sudan has failed to respond to repeated expressions of concern or to the imposition of lesser sanctions." (AP)

## Nuclear protesters arrested

Hamburg: German police detained 64 activists demonstrating outside a north German nuclear power station, where a shipment of radioactive waste bound for the Sellafield reprocessing plant in Cumbria began its journey. The police said that the protesters had tried to prevent a railway engine from entering the grounds of the Krümmel power plant, just east of Hamburg. The power plant operators said that the train left for England during the afternoon. (Reuters)

## MP tells of 'Rao bribe'

Delhi: An Indian court here began hearings on vote-buying charges against P.V. Narasimha Rao, left, the former Indian Prime Minister. The court heard Shashendra Maham, an opposition MP, claim that he had received more than £68,000 for helping save Mr Rao's minority Government during a parliamentary vote in 1993. The bribes were allegedly paid to four members of a regional party and seven others from an opposition group to side with the Government. (AFP)

## Afghan short cut to paradise

Kabul: The Taliban are cutting hair forcibly in Kabul in their drive to turn Afghanistan into a pure Islamic state. "We are cutting hair that hangs over the forehead because when you pray it gets in the way of your forehead touching the ground; the Devil stands between you and God," said Maulawi Abdul Rashid Dar-kazi, of the Taliban religious police, formerly known as the Department for Promoting Virtue and Preventing Vice. (Reuters)

## Thai coalition seeks leader

Bangkok: Thailand's shaky coalition Government is struggling to agree on a successor to Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, the Prime Minister, who plans to resign this week. The six-party coalition, in power for 11 months, has agreed to remain together but has yet to decide who would replace Mr Chavalit, who has been under pressure because of the country's economic crisis. (Reuters)

## Peak-rate calls for troops

Srinagar: India has installed what is claimed to be the world's highest public telephone booth on the 20,000 ft Siachen Glacier in Kashmir so that soldiers fighting in a border dispute with Pakistan can call home on a peak-rate line. (AP)

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## Diana police call in Fiat owners

FROM BEN MACINTYRE  
IN PARIS

FRENCH police investigating the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, have begun calling in thousands of Fiat Uno car owners for questioning in an attempt to find a vehicle that may have collided with the Mercedes limousine carrying the Princess moments before her fatal accident.

Chemical and spectrographic analysis of scrapes found on the right side of the wrecked Mercedes have identified a white paint corresponding to a type known as *bianco-cosmos* used by Fiat on its Uno model between 1983 and August 1989. Some 40,000 Fiat Unos with those specifications are registered in France.

The police search, which could take months, began in the Hauts-de-Seine region on the outskirts of Paris, where 1,800 such cars are registered. Owners were summoned for interview.

If the car is not found in the initial sweep, the hunt will be extended to another 70,000 Fiat Uno owners in France and then to other makes of car.

Last week scientists from the National Police Institute for Criminal Research outside Paris submitted a forensic report to Hervé Stéphan, the magistrate leading the investigation, which concluded that the scrapes were most probably left by a Fiat Uno.

The paint scrapes also correspond to paint used on three additional Fiat models and six other makes of car, but the Fiat Uno theory is reinforced by the discovery of fragments of a Fiat Uno rear brake light some 30 yards before the point of impact. The Mercedes has been completely dismantled and is still being examined.

□ Berlin: Just two months after her death, Diana, Princess of Wales, has become the subject of an academic course at Berlin's Free University. "Myths and politics: Diana - from the Princess of Wales to the Queen of Hearts" is a 14-part lecture series launched last week by the university's political science department. (Reuters)

## Playboy scientist gives astrology five-star rating

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

A WIDE-RANGING statistical study charting the influence of star signs on marriage, work, love and death has been produced by the unlikely figure of Gunther Sachs, famed as one of Europe's most energetic playboys.

His book, *The Astrology File*, is set to become a bestseller in Germany if only because of readers' curiosity about the silver-haired millionaire who was once married to Brigitte Bardot; he is a constant feature of tabloids as an habitué of nightclubs and ski slopes. The book does, however, make a serious attempt to test the assumptions of newspaper astrologists and concludes that star signs do

play a significant part in shaping lives.

Mr Sachs, who studied mathematics, set up an institute for "the empirical and mathematical examination of the possible truth of astrology in relation to human behaviour". Two well-known statisticians from Munich University double-checked to ensure no distortion had crept into the analysis of the data, mostly from Swiss authorities. Switzerland has held a regular census since 1850. Since 1875 it has recorded the hour of birth of every citizen.

The scientists studied all marriages conducted in Switzerland between 1987 and 1994 - focusing on 717,526 men and

women. Marriage and divorce figures were correlated. After all the obvious distortions had been factored out, Mr Sachs's team of scientists agreed on the three most durably attractive star partnerships: Capricorn male with Pisces woman; Pisces man with Scorpio woman; Gemini man with Taurus woman. The three most tenuous relationships appear to be Libra male with Aries woman; Aries man with Leo woman; Gemini man with Capricorn woman.

Mr Sachs, a 65-year-old Scorpio, said that "the husband of a Gemini woman lives with a higher than average risk of divorce". He has himself been married to a Gemini, the former Swedish model Mirja, for 28 years. "I hope that this status quo persists in spite of the stars."

Mr Sachs, who became a Swiss citizen, also examined 1,195,174 Swiss deaths between 1969 and 1994. Narrowing the causes of death to 20, he found disturbing patterns: Leos had a tendency to die of strokes, Leos and Librans were prone to lung cancer, Scorpios and Capricorns to stomach cancer, and Pisces were vulnerable to accidental death and breast cancer.

The database for suicide was narrower - 30,358 men



Sachs and present wife, Mirja. According to his theory, it is a star-crossed match

and women - but enough to draw conclusions: Taurus, Pisces and Cancers were more likely to kill themselves; Librans and Sagittarians were least likely. Pisces suicides preferred sleeping pills, Taurus exhaust fumes and Cancers often shot themselves.

Data from the British Accident and Insurance Management company, collecting information on those involved

in 25,000 car accidents, showed that Taurus and Virgo drivers were more accident-prone, while Leos and Scorpios were better drivers. Data from 231,036 German students confirmed stereotypes of newspaper astrologists: Librans showed a significant inclination to study law.

Mr Sachs claims his study was "the first time that astrology has been put on a scientific

ally supported basis". He argues that astrology is a source of fascination for individuals and governments, yet they are embarrassed to declare their interest. "Astrology is like a fiery red-haired, well-endowed, much-desired mistress - who is nonetheless hidden away from the world." It took a playboy scientist, he says, to bring this passion into the open.



Sachs and his former wife, Brigitte Bardot, in Spain

## Mir orbits Earth with door open

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S cosmonauts faced a new peril in the space station Mir yesterday, when mission control announced that the outer hatch on the orbiter had not closed properly.

After several successful efforts to repair Mir, including spacewalks and the replacement of the onboard computer, the two Russian cosmonauts and one American astronaut were faced with the uncomfortable prospect of effectively orbiting the Earth with their door open.

The problem arose after Anatoli Solovyov, Mir's commander, and Pavel Vinogradov, the flight engineer, completed a gruelling six-hour spacewalk on Monday to remove a solar panel, which will be replaced tomorrow during a second spacewalk.

The operation was delayed after mission control in Moscow reported that Mr Solovyov's spacesuit was not functioning properly and was

failing to transmit information about oxygen supplies and other vital data. The walk went ahead regardless, but after the two Russians returned they realised that the outer hatch had not been sealed properly.

"When they came into [one of the airlocks], an official for mission control, outside Moscow, said, 'they realised that the hatch had not been closed airtight.' She said that the problem did not endanger the crew. The module has three airtight compartments and similar malfunctions in the past have been overcome.

The setback is a relatively minor blip on what has been a comparatively accident-free period for Mir. But earlier this year the space station suffered a serious fire, the failure of its oxygen generators and, in the summer, the orbiter was badly damaged in a collision with a supply ship.

## Balkans leaders set sights on prosperity

FROM REUTERS  
IN AGIA PELAGIA, CRETE

BALKAN nations called yesterday for their bloodstained history to be put behind them and replaced by an era of peace and prosperity.

Greece, Turkey, Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria and Bosnia ended a two-day summit on Crete agreeing to create a framework for economic growth and political co-operation.

"We shall work together to create in our region conditions for the prosperity of our nations in a framework of peace, security, good-neighbourliness and stability," they said in a final declaration.

But the leaders did not have to look far to see how difficult a task they face. A bilateral meeting on Monday between Costas Simitis and Mesut Yilmaz, the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey, made scant progress in solving their problems over Cyprus and the Aegean.

Despite the failure, the Balkan nations all said they were determined to build closer regional ties - accepting that it would take time. "The road is still long. These countries, like us, have problems. But we hope that with time they will be able to face them," Mr Simitis said.

The leaders set up a framework for future links and promised to harmonise their laws, break down trade barriers, support the rule of law, and fight crime and drug smuggling across the region.

## Moscow signs up for mine clearance

BY RICHARD BEESTON

RUSSIA yesterday signalled that it was serious about its pledge to ban landmines, when the Defence Minister promised to work with Britain on a project to promote mine clearance around the world.

Speaking after a meeting in Moscow with George Robertson, the visiting Defence Secretary, General Igor Sergeev said a Russian team of experts would come to Britain next year to co-ordinate efforts with the British Army. Last week Mr Robertson announced plans for the opening early next year of a Mine Information and Training Centre which will assist organisations involved in clearing mines.

Russia was the first country to be invited and General Sergeev accepted immediately and reiterated his support for President Yeltsin's surprise announcement last month in Strasbourg that Moscow would join the Ottawa Process to ban anti-personnel mines. The endorsement of the military is regarded as vital because Russia is one of the world's largest manufacturers of mines and used them extensively during conflicts from Afghanistan in the 1980s to Chechnya in the mid-1990s.

Mr Robertson and General Sergeev also agreed to strengthen military ties by establishing meetings of senior military officers and endorsed plans for regular joint manoeuvres by their navies.

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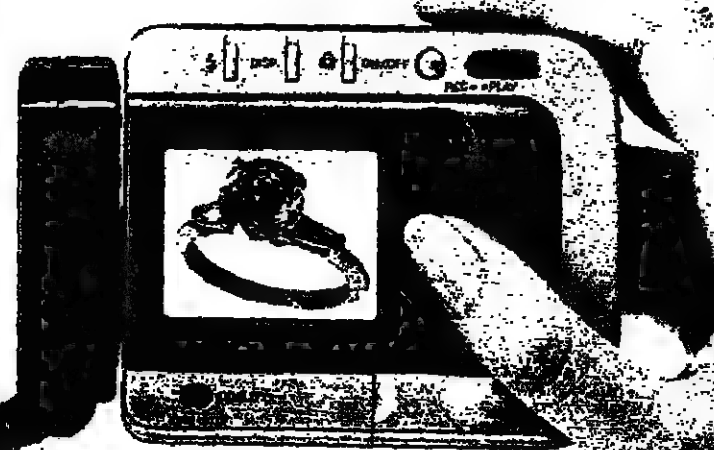
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# Women – the inferior sex



In our final extract of his biography of Alfred Kinsey, James H. Jones looks at how Kinsey's dismissive, misogynistic attitude to women's sexuality was greatly at odds with his philosophy of sexual liberation

Alfred Kinsey made little effort to conceal his low estimation of women's sexuality. In 1948 he told a journalist that the average girl under 20 engaged in sexual activity for social, not sexual, reasons: "It means dates with boys, automobile rides, shows and hilarious company. If intercourse is part of the tax, OK, so long as the other girls in her group are similarly involved." For emphasis, he added: "The drive involves the boy, not the girl."

Many women who had read the male volume took umbrage at his remarks. Some wrote, hoping to disabuse him of his misconceptions. All insisted females were not sexually inferior to males. A few claimed superiority. None made the case for female sexuality more forcefully than a 35-year-old from the Midwest with two young sons. A single parent, her main outlet was masturbation. "I have an outlet of approximately 150 a month," she wrote. "I know six women whose husbands could only partially satisfy them."

Many Americans did not want to hear what Kinsey had to say, fearing he would knock women off their pedestals. Others were afraid he would not.

A lot of women took umbrage at Kinsey's remarks

operating; indeed, volunteers lined up in droves to offer their histories. Many were curious about what the experience would be like, some had problems they hoped to solve, while others held liberal views on sex. Some, however, wished to support science.

Kinsey began writing in the summer of 1951, and continued for the next 18 months. To improve the sample, he removed prisoners and many lower-class subjects, and cleaned up most of the minor statistical errors that had annoyed reviewers of the male volume. He also increased the number of cases supporting the text, providing a firmer factual foundation for his data. Many of his statements drew on his personal observations of human sexual behaviour, as well as his observations of the sexual behaviour of lower mammals.

As with men, Kinsey's data showed a wide gap between the conduct society expected of women and how they actually behaved. Kinsey found 62 per cent of the women in his sample had masturbated; 66 per cent had had sex dreams; 90 per cent had petted; nearly 50 per cent had had premarital intercourse; 26 per cent had extramarital intercourse; 13 per cent had had at least one homosexual contact that resulted in orgasm; and 3.6 per cent had had at least one sexual contact with a lower animal.

These figures were bound to produce an uproar. Yet in many respects, these revelations contained few surprises, and these were of degree rather than kind. People familiar with the male volume understood there was a gap between the prescribed and the actual sexual behaviour of men. There was no reason not to expect similar revelations for women.

Kinsey and Wardell Pomeroy did most of the interviewing for the female volume. The fact that no women were included among the interviewers for the male volume was not lost on the female subjects. Declaring herself "somewhat perturbed to learn that a large part of the investigation of women's sex life is being done by men", a woman from Pennsylvania said: "I feel that this is a grave mistake. But the absence of female interviewers did not stop women co-

operating; indeed, volunteers lined up in droves to offer their histories. Many were curious about what the experience would be like, some had problems they hoped to solve, while others held liberal views on sex. Some, however, wished to support science.



Many Americans did not want to hear what Kinsey had to say, fearing he would knock women off their pedestals; others were afraid he would not

Although he acknowledged that adultery often caused friction and not infrequently led to divorce, Kinsey made it clear that such disturbances were far from inevitable. In some cases the "sexual adjustments with the spouse had improved as a result of the female's extramarital experience". But adultery was not for those easily intimidated by social mores. Rather, it could be handled successfully only by those capable of overriding social mores with willpower, people who sounded suspiciously like Kinsey and his inner circle.

Yet for all its limitations, *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female* remains a provocative and personal work. It reveals the scientific philosophy and methodology, the private passions, values and prejudices, the social agenda and, above all, the inner conflicts of its author.

Alfred C. Kinsey: A Public/Private Life, by James H. Jones, is published on November 12 by Norton, £28

CLARA Bracken McMillen was the ideal mate for Kinsey. While he was eager to begin a female relationship, it had to be with a woman who was secure and unafraid to make the first move; a woman who could look beyond the awkwardness to see his merit. Clara fitted the bill. Not only was she friendly, confident and self-possessed, she was strongly attracted to Kinsey.

Photographs show short-waisted, slightly plump, round-faced young woman. Her eyes were bright and lively, and she wore her hair in a Dutch bob. Had she worked on her appearance, Clara might have turned some heads. But she seemed oblivious to her looks. If anything, Clara looked downright boyish. Her style of dressing was masculine and her taste in clothes frumpy.

Clara's looks and taste in clothes may have enhanced her appeal to Kinsey. He probably preferred a woman who did little to accentuate her femininity. Still, Kinsey must have been warmed by Clara's character. She was poised and self-confident.

## KINSEY'S IDEAL MATE

highly competitive and most important, calm and undruggable, a woman of great inner strength.

Nor is it difficult to understand what Clara saw in Kinsey. Handsome and athletic-looking, he was obviously brilliant and he gave every indication of knowing what he wanted in life. Above all, he was a devoted scientist.

Both were virgins when they started dating. Nor were they unusual in this regard. Yet, in Kinsey's case, traditional morality had an ally. His restraint probably had as much to do with sexual conflicts as with moral rectitude. His behaviour fits the pattern of many homosexual males forming a heterosexual relationship. Recent studies show that gay men who become engaged often

fail to make any efforts at seduction. This is especially true of men with little experience with women, as they tend to feel anxious about their ability to perform. While Kinsey's feelings toward Clara may not have been this troubled, it seems doubtful whether he made serious intimate advances. Because of his lack of experience, his intense moral inhibitions and his confusion about his sexual identity, Kinsey probably

shared the ambivalence that many homosexuals feel about having intercourse with their fiancées. In the event, their marriage was not consummated on their honeymoon, nor for several months thereafter. Kinsey later confided to a friend that the problem involved both inexperience

and physiology. "Kinsey wasn't altogether clear how to go about this," explained a friend, "and secondly, Clara was quite apprehensive."

But, far from being unique, Kinsey and Clara's experience illustrated what critics had been charging all along: society was not preparing young people for marriage. In theory, husbands were supposed to teach wives, but in practice men often did not know enough to fulfil their duty.

How Kinsey and Clara coped with their honeymoon remains unknown. That they would have discussed the problem candidly is unlikely. Still, they did not allow their sexual problems to end their marriage; and the fact that they stayed together relieved a great deal of pressure. It was a sign that each valued the relationship. To remain together without consummating their marriage, Kinsey and Clara had to agree to compromise on what most couples considered fundamental. That kind of resilience and flexibility was to become a salient feature of their marriage.



Clara Kinsey

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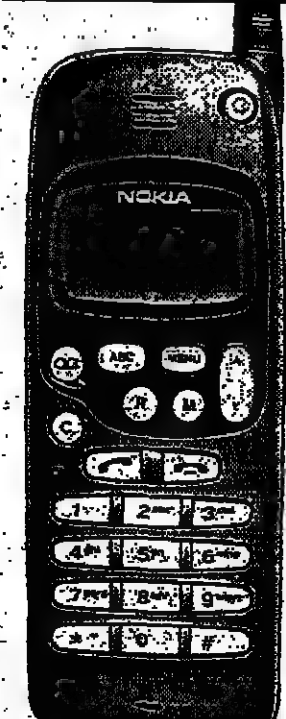
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r sex

# Toddlers on track for success

In pursuit of academic success, private schools are testing two-year-olds. Moira Petty reports

They are little more than babies but 2½-year-old Ami and three-year-old Mary are on trial. As they go through their self-conscious paces before the staff and head of Fabians Green High School, every smile, every word, every gesture of co-operation or their absence will be interpreted and analysed.

Those tots who pass the appraisal will be on the fast track to academic success. At three years old, they will embark on a curriculum that will lead to each girl gaining an average of ten GCSEs.

By four, they will be in possession of the straw boater and bright green blazer that is the trademark uniform of the London school where the ethos is one of high motivation, lady-like manners, and, says the head, Sian Grant, "keeping cynicism at bay".

With a high ratio of applicants to places (three to one at nursery age, seven to one for entry at 11), the prospect for many is of rejection at a tender age. The selection process, normally carried out behind closed doors, has been filmed for BBC's *Modern Times* series.

If the toddlers are blithely unaware of the importance of their reaction to the smiling lady who leans across her desk and inquires of them: "How many legs does an octopus have?", their parents realise that they, too, are under scrutiny.

There is a heart-stopping moment when Ami, perched on the knee of her father, newsagent and confectioner Mukul Patel, is asked: "Have you been to a zoo?" As Mr Patel obligingly shakes his head, you can't help feeling that Ami has been condemned because of the parental omission in not introducing her to captive beasts.

Ami was not offered a place. Mr Patel, an honours graduate of an Indian university whose family lives above their shop in Enfield, is still bewildered. His older daughter Karishma, now seven, was also rejected.

They are bright girls who need direction," he says. "I am very busy, working 14 hours a day, seven days a week in my shop. My wife comes downstairs to help me, so we have little time to spare."

"At one point, the head teacher stopped me explaining to Ami what she had to do. 'Daddy, don't explain to her,' she said. I thought,

"Oh, no. I've done the wrong thing. I felt shocked."

Jim and Avril Willard, the parents of Mary, had a happier experience and their daughter has been at the school since September. "Mary was asked if she had been on a horse and to the zoo, and she was able to say she had," says Mrs Willard, a biochemist who has taken five years out to be with her daughter.

"Mary is used to a fast tempo. She needs a lot of activity to dissipate her energy. We have a season ticket to the zoo. We go to many museums including the science ones, because she is very mechanically minded. She does gymnastics, ballet, drama, and swimming. We are always out and about, and I see that as my job for now."

Mrs Grant, headmistress for nine years of the independent girls' school where fees rise to £1,650 a term, says she is looking for parents "who want the best and who will support us. Have they stimulated the child, or just put her in front of a video and told her to be quiet? Can the parents control the child's behaviour on a day when they're out to impress? All this is a reflection of values in the home."

Mrs Grant says she is obliged to select those girls who will best be able to cope with the academic tenor of the school, which educates up to the age of 16. But how accurate is her assessment of a two-year-old? In the documentary, she and another member of staff are discussing the youngest applicants. "They're not being asked to go through hoops, just to reveal what they're capable of," she says.

She notes the relationship between child and parent and the keenness of discipline. "If the child is banging the drawer of my desk, I let it go on for a bit to see what the

more rigorous. Mrs Grant believes that more schools will include testing of two-year-olds.

The test begins with a stint with the head of the nursery school. She is looking for the signs that a girl is ready to begin reading and writing with good co-ordination and the ability to follow instructions. The toddlers are asked to pick out colours, to count, to join the dots.

Then they are ushered into the head's office, parents in tow. They are encouraged to talk about themselves so that vocabulary and experience may be gauged.

"They're not being asked to go through hoops, just to reveal what they're capable of," she says. She notes the relationship between child and parent and the keenness of discipline. "If the child is banging the drawer of my desk, I let it go on for a bit to see what the

parents will do. If they don't intervene, I will talk to them about what we expect of them. Do they want the type of disciplined environment we offer here or are they more the free expression type?"

Sushma Shah, the mother of pupil Anjali, confesses to feeling nervous during her daughter's test last May. Mrs Shah, who qualified as a dentist in Africa, had at the time just sat examinations to register in Britain.

"So I was feeling really stressed and my brain was analysing all that Anjali was doing. I explained that she didn't like colouring very much, but loved ballet and singing. They asked her to sing. I appreciated that they were looking at a different aspect of her. We're great believers in discipline so that paid off. She was willing to sit on Mrs Grant's lap and chattered away about going on the plane to India."

Mr Patel says of the testing system: "I've never seen anything like it. What do they expect from a 2½-year-old? If they take only the best children, they're bound to turn out the best."

Mrs Grant claims that the system is selective but not elitist. "People are too quick to put their own expectations on to their children," she says. It is not biased in favour of middle-class parents, but against those who "don't always handle their children sensibly". Candidates for entrance at 11 are scrutinised as searchingly as the toddlers.

Forty-seven per cent of the girls are from ethnic minorities. "Some parents have two or three jobs and make sacrifices to send their children here. One market-stallholder says proudly: 'Look what my daughter has become.' We respect all parents equally."

Meanwhile, Ami's father is scrambling to find the right school. She is in a state school, but, with her sister, has been offered a place at a private school. "State schools are too slow," he says. He still thinks Ami's rejection was unfair. "They didn't tell us where Ami fell down. If I have a third child, I'll have them holding a pencil at 18 months," he jokes. "No, of course I wouldn't force a child. They should have time to play. You can't bring those years back."

● *Testing Times*, November 12, BBC2.



Soraya, 3, takes a test where she is asked to pick out colours, to join the dots and to count

Of Englishness and innocence + Short long on pragmatism + Animated argument

## A national heroine she ain't

Nigella Lawson



JUST imagine that it was the other way around for a moment. What if a foreigner pair working over here were found guilty of killing her baby charge, an infant Briton?

Somehow it's difficult to believe that the tabloid press would be quite so insistent on pushing the nanny-of-all-our-hearts line. Who, then, would be crying foul at a jury's decision to convict?

That isn't to miss the point. For, her family and friends (who have no obligation to be objective in such matters) apart, the general assumption seems to be that Louise Woodward's being British is guarantee enough of her innocence. To suggest otherwise — or moot that a jury that has heard many days' worth of evidence might be in a better position to judge the matter

than those of us fed goblets of information prepared for domestic consumption — would be downright unpatriotic.

I am not saying she's guilty. It seems to me, too, that there is insufficient evidence to make such an assumption, but if she really is innocent, it won't be because she's British. Nor does it follow that justice is done only when it's British justice. The banner headlines on Saturday's *Mirror* — "jailed by the system that freed OJ" — may be wonderfully emotive, and not entirely

unfounded, but I would doubt that there are any more miscarriages of justice in US than in British courts.

There have been a mounting number of grumbling criticisms of the Prime Minister's refusal to get involved. Too right he won't. It would be the most terrible impertinence. Of course, we are obliged to presume people innocent — but only until they are found guilty. The one undeniable offence to justice seemed to me the "noose or loose" ruling, but that was

chosen by Miss Woodward's own lawyers. That itself had to make a mockery of the jury's decision, because whether she killed Matthew Eappen or not, the one thing we can be sure of is that it wasn't a premeditated crime, so couldn't have been, in legal terms, murder. But she, or those defending her, took that gamble. They lost. Perhaps they'll win at appeal, at time of writing, it is undecided.

It is truly dreadful that a 19-year-old girl who, whatever she did do, never intended to kill anyone should be sent to jail for 15 years. I feel for her family. But a national heroine she ain't, or shouldn't be. For all that, I suspect that next time there will be a public statement on her behalf by the Spice Girls. Then Innocent Louise's popular canonisation will be complete.

In Short, the Government's great asset

BEFORE the election, when the only thing Tony Blair was afraid of was being complacent, Clare Short was considered a liability. Honest to a fault and therefore politically dangerous — that was the general assumption. It's not a silly one to make: those who speak their minds do not generally make successful politicians.

But Short is turning out to be a fabulous exception to this rule. Far from being a liability, she is turning out to be one of the Government's greatest assets. When I've heard her recently, on the subject of disaster relief in Montserrat and, at the weekend, discussing foreign aid and Third World child labour, her qualities shone out. She won't be tripped up and she won't be embarrassed. Unlike many of us on the left, she is not anxious to sound nice-nice-nice. Being a good person, she doesn't have to strive to sound good. This in itself is a relief.

But most of all, she is eminently sensible: she knows the difference between what can be done and what ideally should be done, and concentrates on the former without losing sight of the latter. In Short, we have that rare thing, a radical pragmatist. I can't help wishing she were in charge of everything or, failing that, education. The children need her, schools need her, we need her. I don't wish to do down Mr Blunkett, but he could usefully be given that other albatross, health.

Blair always promised he would be more radical than anyone thought. The coming reshuffle, then, is his chance to prove and justify it in one.

## Children only want the facts

I'M NOT sure why it's on my bookshelves rather than his, but for some reason I am the custodian of the book which was my brother's favourite when he was a child. It's a slim thing titled, quite simply, *The Boys Book of Facts*. And that's what it is: page after page of all the facts that a boy was expected to have at his inlaid fingertips in the early Sixties.

More, they are the facts that every boy wanted to have to hand, the facts which not only gave him a sense of the world in which he lived (in those days, a world in which boys were the sole guardians of knowledge), but also were the standard currency of the playground. It was an age when some sort of status still accrued to the boy who knew the most world capitals or who could name Jupiter's moons.

No longer. These facts have no currency and narrative is all. Or, at least, not if you are in charge of the schedules for children's television where, according to

the Broadcasting Standards Commission, factual programming has fallen to just 2 per cent of all children's viewing, including satellite and cable, and more than a third of that output comprises simple-minded animations of the *Scooby-Doo* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* variety.

The excuse for running bad adult television is that it's what the public wants: children's schedulers have no such excuse because children, generally speaking, have to take what they're given.

And the only reason they're given badly drawn, semi-animated American cartoons in which the plot is repeated episode after episode (has there ever been an episode of *Scooby-Doo* in which the masks weren't pulled from the heads of the fake ghosts in the last scene?) is because they are incredibly cheap to buy in. What other possible justification could there be for screening these trashy stories?

The tragedy is that the schedulers have convinced themselves that cartoons really are exclusively what children want. If they looked a little further when they went on their buying spree in America they'd find that American schedulers have started to understand that children still have a fascination with facts — which is why Nickelodeon, the main children's cable and satellite channel and the producer of some of the more intelligent animations, has also started producing intelligent and entertaining children's shows full of boastable facts and figures.

They may be facts with American accents, but given the choice between them and the American accented *Scooby-Doo*, I know which I'd take.

And children, who don't make the distinction between education and entertainment in the lazy way we do, would fail even to see why they have to make the choice.

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WHAT ELSE?



# My vision of an open Europe

George Soros prescribes a British cure for the EU

As an idea, European unity used to appeal to the hearts and minds of Europeans. But the reality is far less inspiring. What is the cause of this malaise? Can the European vision of the past 50 years be revitalised?

Europe's failures are often blamed on the fact that the union is an association of states, all tending to put their own interests ahead of the common weal. This is certainly true. But there is also a deeper, less obvious cause of Europe's troubles.

The EU is a rules-based government. This may sound like the rule of law, implying transparency and impartiality. In fact, the EU's rule-making process is anything but transparent. Decisions of the Council of Ministers are just like treaties: difficult to reach and difficult to alter. The rules that emerge are often too detailed, too rigid, and inappropriate to changing circumstances.

But the real problem lies in the idea that social, economic and political reality can be mastered by general norms. Life is too complex and changeable to be governed by fixed rules. The Maastricht treaty, for example, detailed the conditions to be met and timetable to be followed in introducing a single currency. Few foresaw then that Europe would suffer a prolonged period of high unemployment. Reducing government spending, as Maastricht demanded, is not the right policy in a recession. Admittedly, Europe's economies need to make structural adjustments, but emphasising reduced budget deficits probably prolonged the recession.

The flaws of Maastricht epitomise the belief that all problems can be managed if you enact enough rules. To have an independent central bank determining the common monetary policy and then have a stable pact that imposes rigid rules on fiscal policy deprives governments of the tools for macroeconomic management. What worries me most is that I don't see mechanisms for correcting error.

What unblinking commitment to governance by rules ignores is that our understanding is inherently imperfect: the perfect design for society is beyond our reach. We cannot devise a system to anticipate every contingency. We must content ourselves with the next best thing: a form of social organisation which falls short of perfection but is open to change and improvement. That is the idea of open society, and I would like to propose it as a new organising principle for the EU.

The bureaucratic view of the EU, embodied in the Maastricht treaty, is a Cartesian, rationalist construct. It shares the problems of Descartes's faith in the supremacy of reason. For 50 years, Brussels bureaucrats moved with precise, logical steps, limiting their goals, and setting firm timetables. When one goal was reached it became obvious that another step was needed. Public support was then mobilised. Step by step, the union progressed to become

perhaps the greatest feat of social engineering in history.

The limits of this construction were reached with the Maastricht treaty. The rigidity inherent in the euro means that the common currency will have to be followed by a common fiscal policy, including a harmonisation of taxes on the earnings of capital. But such measures will be extremely unpopular. A common currency may end up destroying the European Union because its deficiencies cannot be corrected simply by taking another step forward. It is time to change course. Since Descartes's time, we have had ample opportunity to discover that reason has its limitations. When I speak of Europe as an open society, I am thinking about coming to terms with our fallibility. Injecting a dose of British empiricism into Europe's Cartesian project could do the Continent a lot of good.

The idea of open society, with its commitment to freedom and social justice, can perhaps also give Europe a new sense of mission. During the Cold War, the presence of a common totalitarian enemy seemed to provide Europe with its moral purpose. But now that the communist menace has disappeared, the unity of the West is also disappearing. The task before us is to re-energise Europe through an idea that inspires.

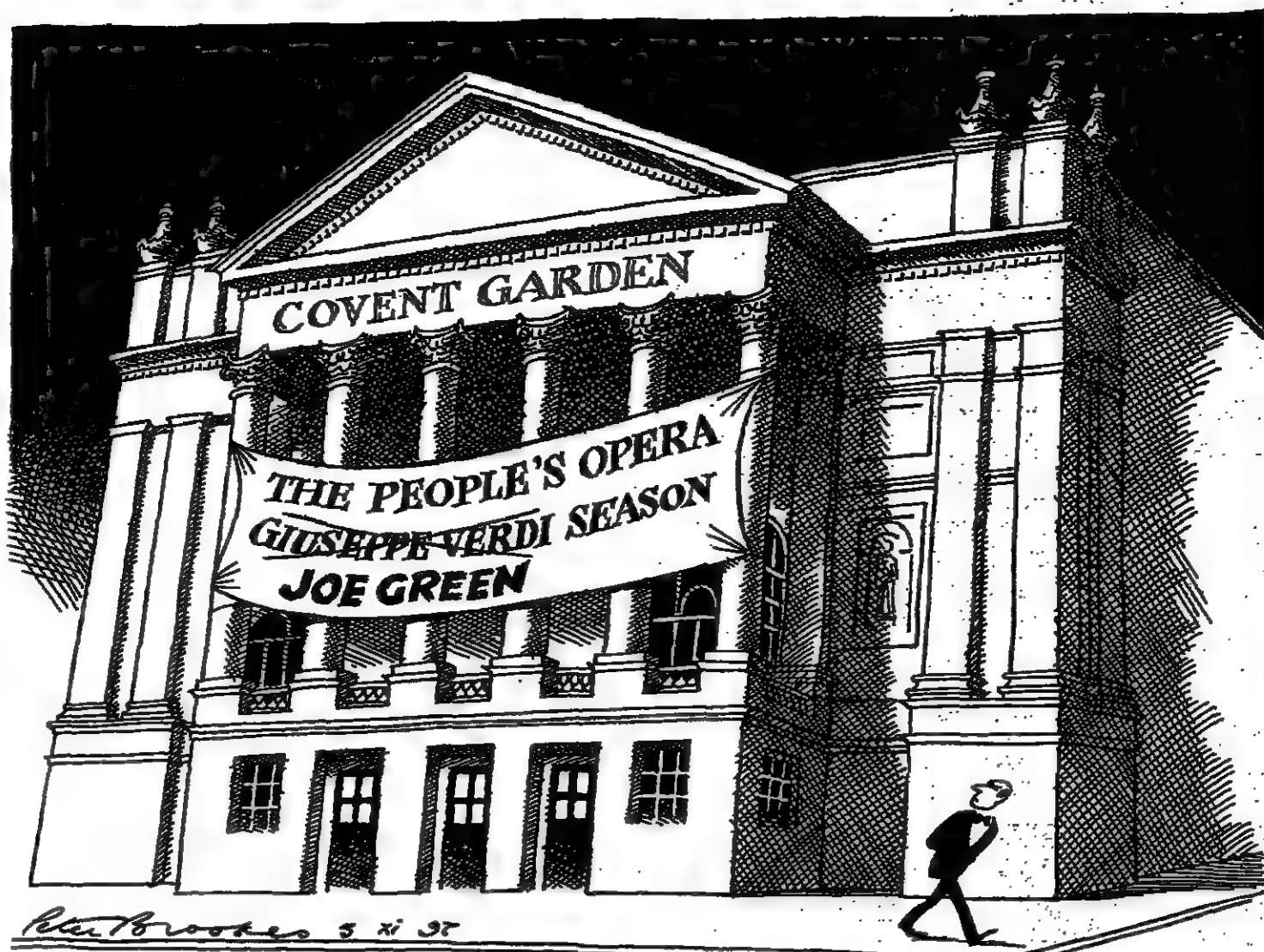
What would the EU look like as an open society? There would be a common market, common currency, and common fiscal policy, but also a government accountable to all its people. The federal European government can be acceptable only if it is combined with the notion of subsidiarity, necessary to accommodate the rich cultural and national heritage of the continent.

Safeguarded by a Bill of Rights and independent judiciary, Europe would be even more likely to succeed than the United States as a prototype of open society. Its diverse nationalities, cultures and traditions are not too far removed from each other to be compatible. There is a reasonable balance between the states that compromise it, although after reunification Germany has become a little too strong for comfort.

Establishing a common vision above petty interests is of particular importance in European defence. Security is no longer tied to the interests of individual countries, as the Bosnian conflict demonstrates. The war there did not impinge on the national interests of any one country. Nevertheless, the passivity of the rest of Europe may have inflicted more damage to the common interest than any other event in recent history. It was grievously mishandled because it was not treated as an open-society issue.

It is for the people of Europe to decide exactly what kind of Europe they want. The EU as it is fails to meet their needs and aspirations. But what is imperfect can be improved. This is what open society is all about.

The author is chairman of the Open Society Institute.



## It's a real bullet, Tosca

Chris Smith's plans for London opera can only mean the death of ENO

Nothing is sacred. The soft centre has not held and anarchy is loosed upon the West End. The Government intends that the Royal Opera and English National Opera should cohabit. They have blown too much money for too long to merit separate homes. The game is up. The far lady has sung her last.

The Royal Opera at Covent Garden and the ENO at the Coliseum have been the Mutt and Jeff of British opera. They have been Marshall and Snelgrove, Cross and Blackwell, Little and Large for as long as we can remember. The one has been for the toffs, the other for the plebs. Covent Garden sings foreign, the Coliseum English. Covent Garden is champagne and smoked salmon, the Coliseum cheap wine and sweaty dive-bars. We emerge from Covent Garden smugly uplifted, brushing gilt dust from our shoulder. The Coliseum hurls us out into St Martin's Lane like so much broiled offal.

Both are charities of pre-Reformation public spending. I have enjoyed them too much not to shed a tear at their dissolution. Entertainers fool themselves when they think that the public goes to a theatre just to see their show. It also goes to experience a particular building. The rich go to Covent Garden to be seen at Covent Garden, to throng the Crush Bar, to enjoy the spirit of the place.

That is why audiences have collapsed now that the Royal Opera is using other London venues during rebuilding. The places are wrong. Does anyone think Glyndebourne would survive for an unsubsidised minute if relocated where picnics were impossible? Half the pleasure of the Coliseum was to sit under its vast cream and maroon auditorium, beneath prancing horses and naked breasts, while bar upon tier swayed to Bellini and Offenbach. Half the point was to be "not Covent Garden".

Both London opera companies are insolvent. Each has debts it cannot hope to pay back. The ENO is desperate, sitting on a £5 million deficit and losing money despite a £12 million subsidy. The Royal Opera is not just desperate, it is plunging into an abyss. It will lose £3 million this year and faces an accumulated deficit of £15 million on entering its new building in 1999. Years of mismanagement have come to this. London opera has hit a wall of pain.

Opera directors have long regard-

ed such crises as completely normal. The procedure is to don sackcloth and ashes and demand money with menaces from the Arts Council, the Arts Minister and the Treasury. The great and good are invited to the Grand Tier. There is murmuring about centres of excellence, trickle-down and outreach. The jailer's knife raises over Florentine's neck. Suddenly the trumpet of salvation is heard offstage, the minister arrives and Fidelio's budget lives to sing another day. The metronome ticks of another million.

Yesterday something went badly wrong. Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, has taken the opportunity of Covent Garden's temporary closure to break the spell. Logic says that if two opera houses are both bankrupt, they had better become one. By sharing one building, with the Royal Ballet in the attic, a spare company can go touring the provinces. If the number hearing subsidised opera in London is to be halved, at least opera can be taken to people outside London. The Coliseum can be sold. The ENO must in future tell its middle-brow audience to visit its productions "at Covent Garden". Those seeking a cheese sandwich will find one in the basement of the Savoy.

Assuming the proposal goes ahead, the outcome is clear. The English National Opera company is being told to drink hemlock. Its team may survive while at the new Covent Garden, struggling to put together a "distinctive" English-speaking repertoire and taking it on tour. But subsidies have rendered this distinction obsolete. Audiences will be going "to Covent Garden", to see particular operas, singers and productions. There is no sense in giving one label to some productions, another to others. To pay for separate opera overheads in one building, not to mention a separate orchestra and chorus, would be indefensible. Co-habitation is a sop. The toffs have won.

The extravagance of the London opera companies is legendary, well-illustrated in the BBC documentary, *The House*. Money simply pours out of the door in mysterious payments, lavish designs and stupefying expenses. We have no idea how much grand opera would cost in Central London if subjected to normal project management. We do not know what we would get, or how much would be lost artistically, if either the Coliseum or Covent Garden tried operating at lower levels of unit cost. No one has dared test the question.

The same question was asked of Fleet Street newspapers in the 1970s. Conventional wisdom held that there was "only room" for three or four titles in London in future. Costs were fixed by union restrictive practices. The unions were happy to see the number of titles shrink, provided only that the titles surviving members were maintained. Unions are never concerned with numbers employed, only with average incomes of those in work. A syndrome that wiped out London's docks. It took exceptionally tough action by newspaper proprietors in the mid-1980s to break this syndrome. As a result the number of titles stopped falling. Consumer choice was preserved, profits rose and cover prices fell.

Opera today is like Fleet Street yesterday. The entertainment business is notorious for restrictive practices, none more so than subsidised music. The absence of Covent Garden from the television, video or recording business, or from other forms of outreach, is shocking, given the size of its public subsidy. The unions forbid any reproduction of performances, except at prohibitive cost. Management and the Arts Council have acquiesced in this. Nobody knows how much money must have been lost as a result.

Instead of a competitive duopoly, we are to have a comfortable monopoly. Two companies that might have deserved a sentence of penal servitude have had a more drastic sentence passed on them. One is to be

executed as a warning to the other. Government has lost patience. London opera is to be taken into care. It is to be nationalised. The Arts Council, always a mere pawn in Covent Garden's fist, has been swept aside. Whitehall will now expect to fund and direct the new Covent Garden building.

This is good news for the Royal Opera. Institutions which government funds get away with financial murder, be they prisons, hospitals, navies or royal palaces. Covent Garden may be able to seize part of the ENO grant to save it from bankruptcy — before the Treasury gets wise to the fact that its grant to London opera should now be halved. The Royal Opera should receive not a penny until that company gets its unions in order and ends restrictive practices on broadcasting. The ENO orchestra and chorus must go and Covent Garden's own musicians and singers put on personal contracts.

This is seriously radical. The Government has tasted blood. The message to other rogue elephants in London's arts jungle is awesome. The Royal Shakespeare and Royal National theatres are also competing with each other (and the private sector) at the taxpayer's expense. The logic of the Coliseum decision is that the RSC should sell the Barbican and merge with the RNT on the South Bank. Again, Mr Smith is subsidising five symphony orchestras in London (plus the two operas), all competing for a dwindling market of audiences. There must be scope for cohabitation here. The South Bank board and its Festival Hall draw a bigger subsidy than the Coliseum, yet compete with the Albert Hall, the Wigmore Hall and the Barbican Hall. This looks like madness.

These are questions decent people have not been expected to ask. Decent people put their shoulder to the wheel and lobby like hell. They keep their heads down when the muck starts to fly, cut a deal with Whitehall behind the woodshed and sneak away with their perks and gongs.

That script has been ripped apart. London's cultural institutions, used to years of effortless equilibrium, have gone unstable. Grants are being cut. Boards are in turmoil. Budgets are flying everywhere. And already the Treasury Scorpions are avenged. It was a real bullet, Tosca. The Coliseum is dead.

### Simon Jenkins

## Grave concern

THE cemetery where Dodi Fayed's body was interred is being investigated by the local council amid suggestions of neglect by its owner, Brookwood cemetery in Surrey, the largest in Britain, gained international attention when the friend of Diana, Princess of Wales, was buried there within 24 hours of his death in Paris. But his father, Mohamed Al Fayed, caused surprise by moving the body to his nearby Oxted estate. The cemetery's owner, Ramadan Gurney, is controversial.

The widow of Sir Thomas Becham, the conductor, exhumed her husband's body in 1991 after seeing the shoddy state of his grave. The council responded by forcing Gurney to "take remedial action".

Some locals remain unhappy. "I have seen him clear large areas and re-sell the plots to different people," says Dorothy Richards, who was brought up by the cemetery (her father worked on the 450-acre site) and has lived in a house there since. "Dodi's plot was in one of these newly-declared areas." Al Fayed selected Dodi's plot — a privilege for which Mr Gurney charges extra. Mrs Richards continues: "Everything is in a terrible state. The grave of an old cemetery manager, George Lambert, who only died a few years ago, lies broken under an old fireplace and television set."

Such allegations are being taken seriously by Surrey County Council. "There has been a lot of concern

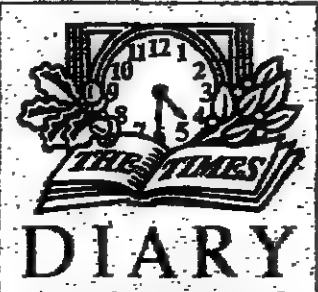


Moving on: Dodi and Becham

from both the religious authorities and the police," says Steve Lawrenson, from the planning office. "We are investigating."

I telephoned Gurney to float these points past him but he was "on business" in Cyprus. His associates would not be drawn.

LOCAL takeaways in Herts have failed to impress the American actors, Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, while on location: they order food from London's trendy



Nobu (average cost with delivery: £300). "Their driver comes to collect or we send it in a taxi," says a kitchen voice. "They're particularly fond of sakuni."

### Vintage whine

IT IS the ultimate club for losers. After the Tories' implosion last May, the Exiles was formed for casualties to dine, and occasionally whine. Recently the club's Philip Oppenheim (formerly a dashing MP) organised a wake at the Saville Club. One of the cheeriest diners was Sir Jeremy Hanley, handing out business cards. "There's life outside politics," chirped the former party chairman. "There may be one or two who could do with some work, but most of them could not be busier."

"We all got round one table,"

says David Shaw, who represented the good people of Dover before they turned on him. "Mind you, it was quite a large table."

WILLIAM HAGUE and Fiona Jenkins should grow accustomed to married life while honeymooning next month in a £380-a-night hotel suite in India. The room boasts its own "love swing".

### Sold at last

TALES of the Princess of Wales washing-up in his kitchen have



"I see the Tories have changed their name"

done little to raise the value of The Shieling, the Devonshire cottage of James Hewitt. After languishing on the market for two years it has been flogged for rather less than its asking price.

The cottage — a twee little thing with oak beams and thatched roof — was offered at £170,000 but has now gone for around £125,000. "It's a sensible price. The Princess's visit had no impact on the value," says the estate agent. The windfall will come in handy to Hewitt, who has upgraded to a nearby mansion on the proceeds of Anna Pasternak's book, *Princess in Love*. His new pad could do with an MOT.

BRIAN IDDON, MP, will mark the day by bringing gunpowder into Parliament — the first time since Guy Fawkes. A former science lecturer, he wants to publicise the importance of chemistry. Does the Sergeant at Arms know?

### Late news

GROCERS, Princess Margaret has learnt rather late in life, like their supper on time. Saturday found Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover celebrating his 70th birthday with 350 close chums at the National Gallery. They had gathered around eight for a four-course feast in the Sainsbury



At last... Princess Margaret

Wine, galleries for which their host, with customary generosity, shelled out £30 million.

There was only one thing missing: the guest of honour, Princess Margaret, without whom dinner could not be served. Half past eight struck: nine o'clock passed, and still she did not show. Eventually, at quarter past nine, she turned up. "We were starving," says an impatient diner. "The delay could have wreaked havoc with the sorbet."

JASPER GERARD

### Alan Coren



And lo, quick as a flash, there came miracles on the road

Up until last Monday morning, I had little in common with St Paul. The little was that I had also travelled the road to Damascus, but as nothing untoward happened in the way of flashing lights, visions, or miracles, you will I'm sure agree that things in common do not come much better. But last Monday morning, they suddenly came much bigger. They came much bigger on the road to Cricklewood, where something untoward did happen in the way of flashing lights, visions and miracles.

Literally untoward, at that: which is to say that the flashing light appeared, in my rear-view mirror, a nanosecond after I had driven past it in an untoward direction. It had not been a flashing light when I had approached it in a toward direction, it had been a grey box on a stick; it became a flashing light only after I had passed it, because I had passed it too quickly, and it wanted a snapshot of my departing number plate. This, of course, instantly became the first vision, as the number slowly materialised in Old Bill's developing fluid, only to be nudged aside by the second vision, a raty letter inviting me either to submit my licence for defacement on a charge of belting down the A41 like a madman, or, in the event of my actually being a madman, to try to weasel my way out of it in court with a brilliantly argued defence packing the judicial wallop of a load of old oak, which would bring the back tumbling from his bench and rolling around helplessly on the courtroom parquet until, such time as he managed to struggle to his feet, wipe his eyes, and announce that he was throwing the key away.

That being the third vision. There was, however, a fourth — as how could there not be, given that most of the rural weekend from which I was now speeding home: had been given over to heated gabbling about whether justice needed, not only to be done, but to be televised to be done? I shan't elaborate, all your own weekends will have been spent jawing the selfsame issue to tatters. I wish merely to offer my vision of that inevitable day when, thanks to the exponential proliferation of TV channels and the dearth of anything to put on them, dozens will offer the daily doings of courts throughout the quendum. Will this affect justice? Who can say, but look, there is an old wag in the dock accused of speeding, he has retained Charlie Bood, George Carman and John Thaw, and after six weeks, have triumphantly argued the selection of a jury of 12 old wags who own fast cars; and see, the queue of expert witnesses stretches around the block, each clutching a wad of money in one fist and, in the other, testimony written by a panel of Oured scriptwriters which they will soon deliver to piped music composed for the occasion by Harrison Birtwistle.

Might, then, the old wag get off with only a wiggling? Almost certainly (and if so, he will subsequently appeal successfully against the wiggling on the grounds that it upset one of his grandchildren), but if the jury does accidentally find him guilty, the verdict is bound to be set aside following Dale Winton's tearful request to camera that viewers now ring one of two Freephone numbers, bearing in mind, as they dial, that the old wag not only has a hacking cough but also gives huge sums to Save the Children.

Now, there might have been even more to this last vision had it not suddenly been interrupted, by the miracle. Another flashing light had appeared in my mirror, blue this time. I pulled over, thinking: blimey, they're quick, they have found a place that does ten-minute processing, so I got out of the car and was preparing to scan the moist snapshot, fakedly aghast, when the policeman who had got out of his said: "You realise you're committing an offence, sir?"

The present tense. Strange! I had, of course, been driving impeccably since the initial flash. I shook my head. He beckoned me to the rear of my car, and pointed. I stared. I may have reeled. Because, the night before, I, along with all the other weekend guests, had parked in the muddy, rutted field outside our host's farmhouse.

"It's illegal," he said, "to drive with an illegible registration plate."

I took a cloth from the boot, and wiped it clean. "Thank you," I said.

Thank you, God.





## THE GOOD EMUSCEPTICS

Which side really wants the best for Europe?

The Government has a new mission: to rid the country of Euroscepticism. The Labour/Liberal Democrat cabinet committee yesterday discussed how this battle was to be fought. By the evening, Gordon Brown had launched the first missile, in the *Spectator*/Allied Dunbar lecture. After a thoughtful and acute analysis of the historical roots of Britishness, the Chancellor went on to damn the notion that being pro-British should be equated with being anti-Europe.

Mr Brown is right to draw attention to Britain's outward-looking traditions. Though an island, this country has never been insular. Rather, its surrounding seas have provoked a national urge to explore, to trade and even, in the past, to conquer. Britain's foreign policy has always been one of engagement rather than isolationism, and of ensuring a balance of power in Europe.

The Chancellor's analysis of the post-Cold War era is also instructive. When the Soviet Union was Communist, Britain's instincts were closer to those of America than to those of anti-Nato France or pacifist West Germany. But these days there is no tension between being Atlanticist and pro-European. Indeed, Britain's influence with Washington is enhanced by its influence in Europe and vice versa.

Where Mr Brown and his Labour and Lib Dem friends are on weaker ground is in equating Euroscepticism with anti-Europeanism. There is, and will always be, a vociferous but small section of the population and political classes that wants nothing to do with Europe. These people voted "no" in the 1975 referendum and would vote "no" again given the chance. They are, on the whole, suspicious of foreigners and happy to be called "little Englanders".

But there is another, more numerous, group of people who believe that Britain's future lies in Europe, but are unhappy with

the way in which the European Union has developed. These people, many of whom are younger and more "modern" than Mr Brown, are sceptical not of Europe per se, but of a particular design for Europe which seems old-fashioned, rigid, cumbersome and antithetical to the interests not just of Britain but of continental countries too.

This Eurosceptic strand is not xenophobic but internationalist. It wants Europe to be able to compete with the markets of the Far East, not to retreat into an inward-looking and declining, possibly protectionist, club. This is a more up-to-date vision than the Mitterrand/Kohl one of heavy-handed integration and regulation. It sees Europe's future as being based on flexibility not rigidity. The EU needs to be light on its feet — with not one interest rate and exchange rate for all but the ability to be responsive to individual countries' economic circumstances so as to maximise growth and prosperity.

Moreover, these modern Eurosceptics fear that the very danger that political and economic integration was designed to prevent — that of the rise of nationalism — may instead be enhanced by EMU. If high levels of unemployment are caused in the poorer countries by a one-size-fits-all interest rate, and if national politicians find themselves impotent to remedy it, far-right anti-democratic parties will reap the rewards. If taxpayers in richer countries are then expected forever to pay huge subsidies to poorer ones, xenophobia will take hold.

These Eurosceptics are often lumped together with anti-Europeans. Crude, xenophobic, old-fashioned slogans based on the presence of the Queen's head on the banknote obscure the far more cogent and intellectually respectable arguments of modern Euroscepticism. These are views to which Mr Brown and his colleagues should listen with respect, not begin a mission to destroy.

## EUROPE'S HIGHWAYMEN

Blair should demand guards for convoys through France

France's lorry drivers have a right to withdraw their labour; that is a matter between them and their employers, with whom they have some genuine grievances to pursue. They can have no right deliberately to deprive other people of work and ruin farmers and industries throughout Europe. Their blockade of France is not strike action, but a war of economic sabotage. It is totally illegal, recklessly irresponsible and inflicts grave economic damage both on France and on its trading partners.

It is also supported by a majority of their compatriots. There is a curious symbiosis between French voters and their *routeurs* which paralyses French governments almost as effectively as the drivers are once again choking Europe's arteries. A year ago, the centre-right Juppé Government tried to ignore Operation Escargot, only to intervene in the end with promises of public money to help finance a settlement. The Socialist Opposition lined the barricades then, jeering and cheering. Those who ring the bells for illegality are justly condemned one day to bring their hands; but faced with a repeat performance, that is about all that the Socialists, now in government, are doing.

Like M Juppé before him, the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, claims that the Government is "neutral". Since this is a private-sector dispute, such a hands-off approach would be both technically correct and, for French Socialists, surprisingly "new Labour". But the true picture is different. Ministers are stuck in this dispute up to the hilt. What M Jospin really means is that his Government dares not tackle what ineluctably does fall within the domain of the State, that is the responsibility to enforce the law, including the dismantling of roadblocks, so that others can go about their lawful business.

This is the point at which France's obligations transcend its frontiers. Because the country straddles the European Union's trade routes, it has a clear obligation under

the EU's single market not to obstruct the free movement of goods and people. The French Government implicitly recognised that last year, when it promised to pay compensation to foreign lorry drivers who found themselves stranded — although not to foreign farmers and industries which had suffered grave damage to their businesses. Most of that money has never been paid.

The French Transport Ministry claims that travel corridors through France could not be policed. It adds, tellingly, that such action would "upset the strikers". There may be genuine difficulties in ordering the police to act, because many of them belong to the same Force Ouvrière union as the lorry drivers. But there is nothing to prevent the French military running guarded convoys through France. That would not solve France's domestic problem; but it would at least show good faith about meeting its obligations to its EU partners.

British, German and Spanish businesses stand to lose more than £600 million a week as a direct result of the chaos in France. Spanish farmers, who normally export 8,000 tonnes of highly perishable fruit and vegetables in the month of November, are particularly hard hit. Tomorrow, when President Chirac and M Jospin arrive in London for an Anglo-French summit, Tony Blair must demand guarded convoys as an absolute minimum short-term measure. He should also say that Britain will present a full bill for damages, and will insist that the European Commission takes France to court for breaching the Single European Act.

External pressure should not be required. M Jospin knows that if this confrontation drags on, the damage to France's economic growth will upset his strategy for monetary union. The long-term solution must lie in curbing France's small but highly politicised unions. But that is something which no post-war French Government has dared itself to do. France thinks of itself as the true heart of Europe; it badly needs bypass surgery.

## CIRCLING THE SQUARE

Trafalgar Square can be a traffic-free model for other cities

The city square is at the heart of traditional urban life, a place for citizens to stroll and mingle, to idle and admire. For the tourist, London is one of the most attractive capitals in Europe. Its theatres and restaurants, museums and parks are enjoyed by millions of visitors each year. Yet the historical hub of the city, Trafalgar Square and its environs, is smothered with traffic. It has become an inhospitable, offensive place. Pedestrians huddle on narrow pavements or stand marooned on polluted islands.

Today Westminster City Council launches a three-day public consultation on ways to improve matters. Sir Norman Foster, working in partnership with a host of transport consultants, urban planners and landscape designers, has come up with two principal strategies for the area around Trafalgar Square, Whitehall and the Houses of Parliament. In a free exhibition at the Royal United Services Institute in Whitehall, the public is invited to view these plans and make recommendations.

Traffic is the biggest single challenge. Londoners instinctively deplore the congestion which pedestrian areas produce. Road closure in one place has an inevitable effect on adjacent streets. Certain measures can be taken to redress this: ring roads can

discourage through-traffic from entering the city; deliveries can be limited to off-peak hours. But, if World Squares For All is to mark the beginning of a better urban environment for central London, the habits of motorists will have to change too. The Government will need to invest heavily in improved public transport.

Another challenge is to prevent newly pedestrianised areas developing into ill-kempt haunts of vagrants. This depends critically on the environment and its attractions. Trashy souvenir stands, aggressive beggars, amusement arcades and fast-food chains could quickly recreate the squalor of Leicester Square. High standards in street furniture should be demanded. Simplicity of design will concentrate the eye on the many Grade I listed buildings in the area, as well as making it easier to police.

London has already created successful pedestrian areas. In Covent Garden, citizens and tourists mingle in the cafes and shops of the Piazza. But Trafalgar Square will be an even greater test. If its problems can be imaginatively solved, it will serve as a model for other cities. Londoners should take the trouble to visit the exhibition and make their comments. But they would be advised to leave their cars behind.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Case for joining the single currency is 'seriously flawed'

From Sir Michael Edwards

Sir, Michael Heseltine and his splinter group have every right to argue their case ("Old men forget", leading article, October 31), even though it is seriously flawed. Those of us who believe that it is not in Britain's economic interests to join the single currency welcome a full debate, for this is the only way that the downside will become apparent.

Proponents of joining a single currency have avoided a number of issues which might now emerge. For example, Germany, France and Italy have massive unfunded pension commitments running into billions of marks, francs, lira and euros. This liability for the future, exacerbated by an ageing population, is often ignored.

If we join EMU, we will over time inherit the European socio-industrial cost base. For every £100 of wages in Britain, our non-wage labour cost is a reasonable 518. Germany's on-cost is no less than £32, and in France and Italy it is substantially higher. Given that only 25 per cent of our world trade is with the core EU countries, how are we to compete with and in the Americas, the Far East, the Commonwealth and Britain itself?

If we hand over the levers of economic power to a Central Bank in Frankfurt, the unemployment problem will require to be solved by job mobility: how is this to be dealt with in twelve languages? How, too, will we handle the convergence issue? Britain's global trading interests create an economic cycle which is seldom convergent with continental Europe, and even if convergence is achieved at a point in time, this is like the flash of a camera; the economic cycle moves inexorably onwards. At the present time we are diverging further, as indeed we have been since we joined the Common Market in 1972: give away our control of interest rates, inflation and economic growth, and the variable becomes unemployment with all its stresses and strains.

There are no good reasons for joining the single currency and do not let Mr Heseltine's splinter group per-

suade you that "business is in favour". The pressure for joining does not come from the bulk of the business community, but from a small group of multinationals which have had their own agenda and disproportionate influence within the CBI.

Yours truly,  
MICHAEL EDWARDS  
Chairman,  
Chloride Group, 1969-77 and 1986;  
British Leyland, 1977-82; ICL, 1984;  
Dunlop, 1984-85; Charter, 1988-90;  
15 Woodfall Street, Chelsea, SW3,  
November 3.

From Mrs Gillian Bardinot

Sir, British preoccupation with the economic and business implications of a single currency is perfectly logical, but far removed from the mood in France, where the words "act of faith" can be heard to describe the forthcoming great leap.

Indeed, the whole concept of EMU was conceived less as an economic target per se than as an indispensable springboard to political union, as two founding fathers, Giscard d'Estaing and Helmut Schmidt, have pointed out in a jointly written article published in the *International Herald Tribune* (October 14).

Yours sincerely,  
GILLIAN BARDINOT  
(Maitre de Conférences,  
Institut de Politiques, Paris),  
21 Rue Saint-Honoré,  
78000 Versailles,  
November 3.

From Mr David Clarke

Sir, Michael Heseltine and Kenneth Clarke, as the two leading ministers of the last Conservative Government, bear a large responsibility for the worst electoral defeat the Tory party has had in a hundred years. As you rightly suggest in your leading article of October 31, one would have thought that they would have had the decency to keep quiet for a while.

They were wrong on so many major issues, ranging from lack of support for Margaret Thatcher to their eager-

ness to join the ERM. Why should the country listen to them now? They are yesterday's men — thank goodness.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID CLARKE,  
Woodlands,  
Marsham Lane,  
Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire,  
November 1.

From Mr Michael Ivans

Sir, The Heseltine/Clarke citing of the CBI and TUC as allies in advocating swift progress to monetary union cuts little ice with Aims of Industry. We were against both organisations when we campaigned for bringing trade unions within the law.

It is not true that all the big firms support EMU. Many don't. And the majority of small firms fear the impact of a single currency on their business.

The supporters of EMU are working hard to indicate its virtues — of which there are a few. The public also need to know of the dangers — of which there are many.

We should be aware of the dangers, not only to the UK but also to the European countries which rush to join.

Yours,  
MICHAEL IVANS  
(Consultant, Aims of Industry),  
2 Mulgrave Road, NW10,  
October 31.

From Mr Michael Thompson

Sir, One can derive a certain wry amusement from the stated aim of the newly "bonded" Conservatives to defend the pound.

It can only be hoped that they will prove more effective than their recent long governance might suggest, the current value of the pound being approximately three and a half pence of crisps.

Yours sincerely,  
MICHAEL THOMPSON,  
Hawthorne Hill,  
Whitmore, Staffordshire,  
November 1.

70 years and are not dependent on whale meat and other whale products for their survival, do not fall into that category.

If the Makah Indians go ahead and kill grey whales, despite the failure of the US delegation to secure authorisation from the IWC to do so, this will be interpreted by most of the IWC member nations as commercial whaling, which is not allowed under an existing IWC ban.

The US will be deemed by them to be whaling illegally, in defiance of the ban and of overwhelming public opinion.

Yours faithfully,  
ALISON SMITH,  
Conservation Director,  
Whale and Dolphin  
Conservation Society,  
Alexander House,  
James Street West, Bath,  
October 24.

### Prayers and pints

From Mr Richard Starkey and Mrs Lesleyanne Bowmes

Sir, In 1641 Henry Ewer gave a yearly rent charge of ten shillings (50p) on a house on the present site of The Black Horse pub, South Mimms, for the vicar to preach a Good Friday sermon (letters, October 22, November 1).

On the evening of Good Friday 1936, the Reverend Hey, realising that most of his congregation were in The Black Horse, proceeded down the hill to carry out the full act of worship in the saloon bar.

This practice is still carried out, the vicar ringing time on "service" at the bar and replacing it by a "service" of a more ecclesiastical nature. We still pay the ten shillings to the church, although time has somewhat devalued it, and computerisation has made it necessary to raise a cheque for one pound every two years.

The congregation and regulars are concerned about the 1998 service, as our vicar has moved on to pastures new and we are without a regular cleric. However, we are sure that by then God will provide.

Yours faithfully,  
R. STARKEY,  
L. BOWNESS (licensees),  
The Black Horse,  
South Mimms, Hertfordshire,  
blackhorsepub@aol.com  
November 3.

### I bank, therefore . . .

From Mrs Irene Draper

Sir, I have recently received from an insurance company a request for me to have authorised a "certificate of existence". They kindly suggest that I apply to my bank branch, or to my local post office.

Since I buy my stamps at the newsagent and have loyally stuck to my Aberdeen bank, now 500 miles away — I usually get my money from a hole in the wall — I am in a quandary.

Yours faithfully,  
IRENE DRAPER,  
Maynestay, Catbrook,  
Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.  
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

### Compassion for the unborn child

From the Reverend Iver Martin

Sir, Professor James Drife (letter, October 29) suggests that the Church believes those involved in abortion at first hand to be demons. He further suggests that the Church is more concerned to preach at pregnant women and then leave them to risk death rather than help them. This is both untrue and unfair.

Furthermore, the focus of his attention is placed upon the pregnant woman, but the human life in her womb is ignored. He refers to the 30 women who annually died as a result of septic abortion in the 1960s, but makes no reference to the almost 5 million children who have since died as a result of legal abortion.

Professor Drife appears to justify abortion on the basis that most of the one in four women under 25 having abortion for the first time will never seek another one. But what if a similar statistic existed with respect to those who have murdered for the first time? Would that make murder any less wrong?

Finally, Professor Drife accuses the clergy of regarding women as objects of debate. Any Church that follows the example of Christ will treat people with the same compassion that he demonstrated, and that includes women coming to terms with the guilt and trauma of abortion. But the Church also has a duty to tell the whole truth. It must cry aloud in defence of the innocent unborn and protest to both government and public, and plead with them finally to bring an end to this horror.

Yours faithfully,  
IVER MARTIN  
(Minister, Bon Accord Free Church),  
77 Forest Avenue, Aberdeen,  
October 30.

From Monsignor Vincent Turnbull

Sir, Cardinal Basil Hume (report, October 27) is a deeply sensitive and compassionate man. To suggest otherwise is to do him a grave injustice.

Cardinals, bishops and priests do indeed know from experience that "ethical issues often become less simple when one understands all the facts", to quote Professor Drife. The professor, however, misses an essential point when he . . . in vil. II. Jesus, out of compassion . . . fused to condemn the adulterous woman, as the Pharisees sought. But crucially he did not condemn her wrongdoing; his words "go and sin no more" make that clear.

Abortion is wrong in principle because it is the destruction of an innocent human life. No amount of compassion can alter that fundamental principle. It is unacceptable to do what is wrong in order that good, no matter how great, may come of it. To think otherwise is a recipe for moral chaos and confusion, which is what we have in the abortion scene today.

Professor Drife must surely know that risk of death or of septic abortion is not the reality in the vast majority of abortion situations today. Where is his compassion for the unborn child?

Yours sincerely,  
VINCENT TURNBULL  
(Parish priest),  
St Catherine's Church,  
Birkenhead Road,  
Haydock, Wirral, Merseyside,  
October 30.

### Language 'tsar'

From Mr Michael Heaney

Sir, Mr Peter Hall (letter, October 31) asks for an appropriate English word to convey adequately the status or function of the holder of the important office of "language tsar". I believe the word he seeks is "pedant".

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL HEANEY,  
5 Hanborough Close,  
Eynsham, Witney, Oxfordshire,  
michael.heaney@ulib.ac.uk  
October 31.

From Mr Sohail Rasul

Sir, Surely the only expression which would evoke the same sense of absolute power and authority today would be "language minister without portfolio".

Yours faithfully,  
S. RASUL,  
58 Westbury Road,  
New Malden, Surrey.

From Mr Gerald Moggridge

Sir, How about "bossyboots"?

Yours faithfully,  
GERALD MOGGGRIDGE,  
29 Rossdale, Sutton, Surrey.

From Mrs Adele Kirtick

Sir, Mr Peter Hall is right to deplore the use of the word "tsar".

As someone once said, there is no need to borrow foreign words, English will always provide the *mot juste*.

Yours faithfully,  
A. KIRTRICK,  
26 Warwick Road,  
St Albans, Hertfordshire.

From Mr Geoffrey Payne

Sir, Why not have a language Pope, since infallibility is likely to come into it.

Yours faithfully,  
GEOFFREY PAYNE,  
4 Hales Place, Dresden,  
Skeon-Trent, Staffordshire,  
November 1.







Withoutless debate

OBITUARIES

JOHN STARKS

John Starks, naval architect, died in Teignmouth, Devon, on October 17 aged 80. He was born in Devonport on April 29, 1917.



When, in 1964, Cunard placed the order for its new cruise liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*, John Starks was the technical director of the Clyde-side shipbuilders John Brown and Co, who were to design and build the vessel. It was, therefore, Starks who headed the technical team that realised Cunard's elegant design, a rival to P&O's *Canberra*.

It was the high point in a distinguished career of ship design that had earlier encompassed Britain's first nuclear submarine, the *Dreadnought*. That in itself had been a milestone in a life that had been largely devoted to improving submarine design as it progressed from the cramped boats of the Second World War through to the nuclear age.

John Frederick Starks was the third of six brothers, brought up in the Devonport district of Plymouth. His mother was left a widow when he was still young and the family experienced some hardship. Though academically bright, Starks had to leave Devonport High School at 15 to earn his living and so relieve the strain on the family finances. He became a shipwright apprentice at Devonport Dockyard in 1932. In 1936 he gained a cadship in naval construction, and was selected for training with the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors. He studied at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and gained a first-class professional certificate.

He joined the corps in 1939, and throughout the Second World War worked on submarine design. He was involved in the redesign of the Swordfish class, known as the 140 "S" Class submarine, as well as the "U" Class, both of which later had a leading role in disrupting Rommel's supply line to North Africa. He also worked on the "A" Class submarine, which had a welded pressure hull that enabled it to dive to greater depths than boats with riveted hulls.

In 1945 Starks joined the staff of Admiralty (Submarine) with the rank of constructor commander. Even in a submarine service where the accent is on youth, a 28-year-old commander

was something of a phenomenon. In a departure from design, Starks was involved in the modernising of submarine escape equipment and procedures. At this time, too, the German U-boat *Graph* was captured and put into service with the Royal Navy. Starks was greatly interested in the differences between British and German submarines, and in March 1948 he presented a paper to the Institute of Naval Architects on *German U-Boat design and production*.

Later that year he first became associated with the shipbuilders John Brown and Co at Clydebank. He was based in Glasgow as the Admiralty's principal ship overseer, representing the Admiralty's interests among all the Clyde shipbuilding companies engaged in naval work. This embraced construction of the Tiger Class cruisers which, finally completed in the 1950s, were fitted with automatic 6in and 3in guns to make them a formidable weapons platform. The conception of a new and powerful class of fleet leader gave rise to the *Daring* Class, which also entered service in the 1950s.

From 1951 to 1955 Starks was in Washington, where he worked with the British Joint Services Mission. The navy American friends he made there stood him in good stead during his subsequent work on nuclear submarine design, and it was a particularly happy time for him, his wife Maggie and their two sons.

Back in Britain in 1955, at the Admiralty in Bath, he became chief constructor in charge of a team working on "new design" submarines, the first to go into service with



The QE2, designed and built on the Clyde — a project which gave John Starks great satisfaction

the Royal Navy in the postwar period (for at that time the submarine fleet was entirely of Second World War vintage). These new submarines were the *Porpoise* and *Oberon* classes, which, for the first time, used plastics and glass fibre in their construction. With their high submerged speeds, (16 knots in the "A" Class's 8 knots) and improved diving depths, they were the final expression of conventional submarine design before the advent of nuclear propulsion opened seemingly boundless possibilities for the undersea weapon.

Starks was also involved in the work which led to the Royal Navy's first guided missile ships, the *Cumby* Class destroyers, of which the first to enter service was *HMS Devonshire*. (Other-service critics of this class claimed that the Navy had pulled a fast one for the purposes of the defence estimates, and that the *Cumby* Class were really cruisers. Certainly, by the time *Devonshire*

was completed in 1962 she was, at 5,200 tons, almost twice as heavy as the standard destroyer of those times, and her successors grew even larger.) Starks was next employed on the design of Britain's first nuclear submarines. Although the reactor technology was American, the rest of the boat, including its sonar and weaponry was entirely British in design. *Dreadnought*, the first of a class of submarines which were hunter-killers and not ballistic missile carriers, was launched in 1960. Of all the ships he designed, she was to remain Starks's favourite.

In 1960 he left the Admiralty to join John Brown as technical director. The QE2 project gave him great satisfaction. She was a 900ft vessel displacing only 38,000 tons, remarkable statistics which owed much to the fact that aluminium was used extensively in her construction. As a result, this great ship had a draught of only 31ft. But the clouds were

gathering around John Brown. Already the shipbuilding industry was being challenged by air travel and by foreign competition. In 1968 John Brown joined Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, but this was to be a short lived marriage. The company went bankrupt in 1971, though a sit-in by the workforce prolonged its life, after a fashion, into 1972.

By that time Starks had been invited to join Vosper Thornycroft, the Southampton shipbuilders, and to supervise the work they were doing on Brazilian navy frigates in Rio de Janeiro. After the financial stress of the years on the Clyde, it was a very welcome opportunity. In 1972 he and his wife moved to Rio where they spent five happy years.

On his return to Britain in 1977, Starks retired to his native Devon, to Teignmouth, and enjoyed a contented retirement by the sea for 20 years. He is survived by his wife Maggie and by their two sons.

PROFESSOR A. H. ARMSTRONG

Professor A. H. Armstrong, FBA, classical scholar, died on October 16 aged 88. He was born on August 13, 1909.

HILARY ARMSTRONG was one of a small band of European scholars who in the middle years of this century re-established Plotinus in the position he had been given by Renaissance humanists as one of the leading philosophers of the ancient world, equalled in importance only by Plato and Aristotle.

When Armstrong published his *Introduction to Ancient Philosophy* in 1947, this was not a view that would have been familiar to classical scholars of the British school, nor was it welcomed by them. But since then detailed knowledge of the intricacies of Plotinus's philosophy has been increasingly recognised as essential to a rounded study of the thought of the ancient world, and as an indispensable tool for understanding the thought of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Armstrong's most important contribution to this quiet revolution was his translation into English of the new text of Plotinus's *Enneads*. When the seventh and final volume of his translation was published in 1988, Armstrong's interest in neo-Platonism already stretched back more than half a century, to the years he had spent in Cambridge and Swansea before the war, breaking the ground for his pioneering work. *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe* in Plotinus, which Cambridge University Press published in 1940.

Arthur Hilary Armstrong was educated at Lancing and at Jesus College, Cambridge. On graduation, he stayed for a while at the Classics Faculty library, before moving to Swansea in 1936 as an assistant lecturer in Classics. From 1939 he was Professor of Classics at Valletta, Malta, until the evacuation of British civilians in 1943, when he returned to England, going first to Beaumont College and then returning to the University of Wales at Cardiff.

In 1950 he was appointed to the Gladstone Chair of Greek in Liverpool. Here the significance of his work on Plotinus was increasingly recognised. In 1967 he edited the *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*. By 1970, English mistrust of neo-Platonism had waned sufficiently for Armstrong's work on Plotinus to be rewarded by his election as a fellow of the British Academy.

He had never relished the burdens of academic administration, so in 1972 he took early retirement from his Chair at Liverpool, and accepted an

invitation to move to the University of Dalhousie, at Halifax in Nova Scotia. There a new chair was specially created for him, allowing him to pursue his teaching and research unfettered by external commitments. In 1983, however, he returned to his home in Shropshire.

Naturally reticent, Armstrong greatly valued the stimulus and affection of colleagues and friends. A keen gardener and walker, he did much of his thinking in the open air. He was a voracious reader into advanced old age and was blessed with an astonishing gift of recall.

As well as philosophy, religion played a large part in his inner world. The son of a High Church Tory vicar (first of West Dean, then of Funtlingdon, both in Sussex) he was educated as a devout Anglican. As a young man at Cambridge he was received into the Roman Catholic Church and married Deborah Wilson of a Midland Quaker family. Armstrong, whose theological sympathies were always liberal, welcomed the *aggiornamento* under Pope John XXIII. Over many years he contributed articles and reviews to Catholic journals such as *The Highroad Journal*, *Downside Review*, *The Tablet* and *Eastern Churches Quarterly*, concerning himself mainly with the connections between philosophy and theology in the Patristic Age. He was a pioneer founder, with others, of the quadrilateral Oxford Patristic Conference. He also assisted the Catholic hierarchy, following the second Vatican Council, in the translation of liturgical texts into English. He was not unhappy to don the mantle of Catholic philosopher.

Well before the second Vatican council he had been much concerned at the repression of theologians and scholars under Pope Pius XII, and various factors in later life contributed to make him ever more critical of Christian dogmatism. He eventually returned without fuss to the Church of England, occupying a prominent forward pew at the weekly Sunday morning worship in St Laurence's, Ludlow.

There, in Ludlow churchyard, his ashes have been added to those of his wife, close by the ashes of another distinguished classical scholar, A. E. Housman. No two men could have been more dissimilar in their lives or in their beliefs, but both recognised the importance, for humane learning, of a scrupulous study of the texts of antiquity. Both did so in a way that was quintessentially English yet won recognition in the wider world of European classical scholarship.

Hilary Armstrong is survived by two sons and a daughter, two daughters predeceased him.



STANLEY WILLIAMS

Stanley Williams, ballet dancer and teacher, died on October 21 aged 72. He was born at Chipping, Essex, on March 5, 1925.



Williams teaching at the School of American Ballet

WHEN the Royal Danish Ballet gave its first London season at Covent Garden in 1953, an autograph hunter trying to identify the unfamiliar dancers was asking them to pronounce their names as they emerged from the stage door. To his surprise, the answer from one of the leading men was "Williams".

English by birth, Stanley Williams had grown up in Denmark, begun dancing there and became one of the most stylish artists of the Royal Theatre. But an even more distinguished career was to follow when he moved to New York and became recognised as probably the best ballet teacher anywhere during the past three decades.

Williams was not interested, as a performer or teacher, in brilliant effects. What he was after was perfection, and it was his single-minded pursuit of this that drew such virtues as Nureyev and Baryshnikov to his classes at the School of American Ballet, happy to stand at the barre next to students so to benefit from his concentration on exactness and finish, control and shape, the relationship of one step to another within the musical phrase.

Williams's obsession with excellence, and a certain personal reticence, may have limited his own performing career. He was a joy to watch in the ballets of the 19th-century Danish master August Bournonville, for the smooth eloquence he gave to the solos in *Napoli* and other works. But only once or twice was he given a role that provoked more theatrical fire

from him: as the Gaoler in Massine's *Symphonie Fantastique* and as Mercutio in Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet*. So it was no great sadness to him when an injury restricted him to the less demanding roles since by then he had found that he enjoyed teaching others more than performing.

Stanley Williams's father was an English horse dealer and former jockey, but they moved from Newmarket to Copenhagen when he was about seven. He entered the Royal Theatre's ballet school at nine, on the suggestion of a family friend. He duly graduated into the company and at 24 was promoted to solo dancer — the highest rank, corresponding to principal dancer elsewhere.

But the then director, Harald Lander, must have observed his thoughtful attitude to dancing, and only a year later, in 1950, asked him to begin giving some classes too. Williams never failed to credit his own chief teacher, Karl Marrod, but was out of sympathy with his "sergeant-major" manner, and acquired more understanding of teaching from long discussions with the Russian Vera Volkova, who became artistic adviser to the Royal Danish Ballet.

When George Balanchine was in Copenhagen a few years later, he watched Williams's classes with interest and eventually invited him to New York. He went first as a guest teacher, but in 1964 joined the faculty of the New York City Ballet and its attached school of American Ballet. Williams soon made himself the most vital member of the faculty, of which he rose to become chairman.

He taught both boys and girls at all levels, but his chief

memorial is the succession of outstanding male dancers who graduated into the City Ballet, and the American Ballet Theatre, under his guidance. He also regularly staged some of Bournonville's showpiece dances for the school's annual public programmes, and compiled a collection of these into a big *Bournonville Divertissement*, which entered the City Ballet's repertoire to much acclaim.

Sadly, Williams's native land saw little of him, although one of the earliest proofs of his ability had come during his one brief spell with a British company: the short-lived Ballet Comique founded by the designer George Kirsta in 1954. Offering a repertoire of new ballets by young choreographers, the company failed to find audiences on its opening tour, and was dissolved after a few months. Not, however, before it had shown excellent dancing by its corps de ballet as well as the soloists, and among some of its young dancers a remarkable improvement on their previous work. The credit for this was clearly due to Williams, who had taken leave of absence from Copenhagen to act as ballet master and teacher, besides dancing in ballets by Peter Darrell and others.

Williams received honours in both of his adopted countries. More important to him was the high regard and affection in which he was held by dancers. He was not married, and he did not retire his work was his life to the end. His youthful, ebullient gregariousness gradually changed to a more withdrawn manner, but he never lost his love for his profession and his pride in it, nor the essential kindness behind even his strictest demands.

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**THE BEATLES ON PARADE**

Prince of Wales Theatre

**ON THIS DAY**

November 5, 1963

Home grown talent has always had a leading role in this hardy annual. 1963 was no exception to the rule. The reviewer appears, rather reluctantly, to have enjoyed the show

What has either of these small-scale performances to do with a cheerful bit of fooling in which Mr. Charlie Drake exploits his wit and Miss Tessa Davies's tallness, or with genial, large-scale show-stopping extracts from *Pickwick* and *Half a Sixpence* except that we would never, on these occasions, willing to do without Mr. Drake, Mr. Harry Secombe and Mr. Tommy Steele. It is possible to ask what connexion any of these pleasures has with the youthfully private world in which The Beatles exercise the combination of musical naivety with electronic sophistication which suits their engaging, irrelevant cheerfulness and the



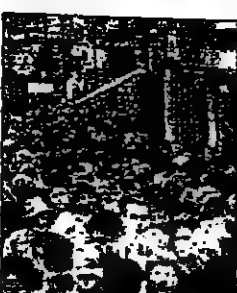




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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 5 1997

## Barclays sets time limit to agree BZW deal

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BARCLAYS has given Credit Suisse First Boston one week to strike a deal over the acquisition of large chunks of BZW, the investment banking arm it put up for sale at the beginning of October.

Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays, said last night that the bank had entered exclusive discussions with CSFB over its proposal to buy the UK and continental European equities arm, as well as the mergers and acquisitions and equities capital markets businesses of BZW.

Excluded from the proposal are BZW's businesses in Australasia and Asia Pacific, as well as the UK equities derivatives arm. Barclays will seek buyers for these businesses separately, though interest has already been expressed by

some early bidders for BZW. Analysts were hesitant about putting a value on the proposal — Barclays has not stripped out the revenues for BZW's separate businesses. Earlier estimates for BZW as a whole ranged from £600 million to £700 million, but the businesses wanted by CSFB could be worth about £500 million.

Mr Taylor said the exclusivity agreement lasts for a week, and that the BZW business contained in CSFB's proposed deal accounted for a little over half of the division's revenues and just under half of its capital. He declined to put a price tag on the deal.

"What we tried to do with the sale process was to seek a bidder for the whole business, but listen to whatever offers there were. CSFB have decided they aren't prepared to proceed with Australasia and Asia at the moment. We have left out the derivatives for a simple reason: there would be a 100 per cent overlap," said Mr Taylor.

About 1,000 of BZW's 7,500 staff, mostly in the front office, will transfer to CSFB if the deal goes ahead. The fate of the back office is less clear, although Mr Taylor suggested that CSFB might outsource the support operation to Barclays pending further arrangements.

CSFB refused to comment last night, except to confirm that it had begun exclusive talks with Barclays. If an agreement can be reached, the Swiss-owned investment bank, which is strong in US equities, will use BZW as the platform for further expansion into European equities. However, it is unlikely that the BZW name will be kept.

Jonathan Davis, deputy chairman of BZW, expressed optimism about the prospects for the deal, even though some of his fellow executives had pinned their hopes on Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, the fast-growing US investment bank. DLJ dropped out of the running, along with Bankers Trust, at the weekend.

Mr Davis said: "It is a very good strategic fit. We hope we can put it together in a shape which will add value to our customers." He said he had begun informing the corporate and institutional clients of both banks. Staff will be told of the proposed deal this morning.

## Interest rate worries surface

CONSUMER optimism appears to have peaked after hitting levels not seen since 1988, a survey published today shows (Alasdair Murray writes).

The quarterly Business Strategies Survey of consumer sentiment found that worries about rising interest rates and inflation are undermining optimism about the economy.

Bridget Rosewell, chairman of Business Strategies and a former member of the Treasury Panel of Independent Advisers, said the survey showed that the Bank of England should resist making further rate rises. "The message is that interest rates should be left

unchanged. There is no sign of an explosion in consumer spending, house prices are stabilising and manufacturing remains weak," she said.

The Bank's monetary policy committee begins its monthly meeting today. Economists believe that recent market turbulence will persuade the committee to leave rates unchanged, though a rise this year is still on the cards.

Monetary data out yesterday showed consumer credit growth fell from 2.93 million in August to 2.73 million in September. But mortgage lending picked up, with housing transactions at a five-year high.

MARKS & SPENCER is to create 5,000 jobs over the next three years as part of its £2.1-billion expansion programme to consolidate its position as Britain's largest retailer.

The company said yesterday that it intends to increase retail space by 33 per cent as it rolls out three of its most successful formats: town centre department stores, edge-of-town supermarkets and smaller food stores.

The drive will leave the retailer with 18 million sq ft of shopping space, a UK workforce of 60,000 and annual profits approaching £1.4 billion by the turn of the century, Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman, said that the company will maintain its product balance of clothing, food and household products without targeting any one area for particular expansion. He dismissed suggestions that it is planning an offensive against the food store chains as "nonsense".

He said: "We'd want our head examined to take on the supermarkets. We're very clear what our food focus is and it's not an attempt to take on the food companies head-on. We know our strengths."

His comments came as the company returned pre-tax profits of £452 million (£430 million) for the six months to September 27. Its overseas stores, which could for 16 per cent of group sales, saw operating profits decline 17.2 per cent, after a £7.2 million reverse from the strength of sterling.

Although the results came in below City expectations, prompting analysts to trim year-end forecasts down £30 million to £1.17 billion, the shares eased only 10p to 500p.

One analyst said: "They are obviously softening the market up for a difficult 18 months, and for a difficult period of growing. The cost of expansion, even without sterling, is still rather more than people expected and this leaves a lot of questions for a company whose shares are on a ratio of 21 times earnings." However, others



Sir Richard Greenbury says M&S will not take on the food stores head-on, but will maintain its balance of clothing, food and household products

## M&S expansion to create 5,000 jobs

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## Revenue drops charges against ex-Nissan chief

BY JASON NISSE

AFTER six years of investigation, involving up to 135 inspectors incurring millions of pounds of costs, the Inland Revenue yesterday dropped its prosecution of Odet Bohnar, the former chairman of Nissan UK, for an alleged £219 million tax fraud.

The Revenue's lawyers told Worthing magistrates that they had been advised by medical experts that Mr Bohnar, 54, was too ill to stand trial and could die before a trial could be completed.

The move comes ahead of a Court of Appeal ruling, expected this week, as to whether Mr Bohnar has to pay £68 million to the Revenue which it is claiming as unpaid tax on his charitable trusts. Last year Nissan UK paid the Revenue £59 million to settle tax claims totalling over £200 million.

Two former directors of Nissan UK, Michael Hunt and Frank Shannon, were jailed four years ago after being found guilty of tax fraud.

Yesterday Mr Bohnar, who has been living in Switzerland since the Revenue launched its investigation in 1991, rejected the Revenue's explanation for dropping the case, saying charges should never have been brought against him.

"The Revenue has known for four and a half years of the perilous state of my health, following surgery for the removal of my entire stomach in 1993," said Mr Bohnar. "We had asked for the warrants to be cancelled on the grounds that the Revenue applied for them and maintained them for ulterior motives, and had no intention whatsoever of bringing me to trial."

The Revenue investigation into Nissan UK, which had been the sole importer of Nissan cars for much of the 1970s and 1980s, was launched in June 1991 with a massive raid on the company's Worthing headquarters and the homes of senior executives involving 135 Revenue officers.

## Pizza executive buys 845 pubs

By DOMINIC WALSH

HUGH OSMOND is expected to step down as an executive director of PizzaExpress to concentrate on running Grovebase Properties, his new company, which yesterday announced the purchase of 845 tenanted pubs from Nomura International.

The pubs are part of the 1,720-strong Phoenix Inns portfolio acquired from Innpreneur in January 1995 for £249 million. Although yesterday's sale price was not disclosed, sources suggested a figure of between £150 million and £200 million.

Mr Osmond, who with Luke Johnson turned PizzaExpress into one of the stock market's star performers, said he was investing "a few million quid" of his own money in the new venture, and would be devoting

## Aon signals bid in the pipeline

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

AON, the rapidly expanding international insurance broker, yesterday signalled a likely bid for either Willis Corroon or Sedgwick, the last two heavyweight insurance brokers in the UK.


Industry sources are also expecting a move by Marsh & McLennan, the huge US broker. Both groups have made no secret of their wish for a big acquisition in the UK. Willis Corroon, which unveiled last year's third-quarter trading figures yesterday, is expected to be the first victim. Sources suggested that Marsh & McLennan was likely to launch a bid, although analysts cited Aon as a more aggressive suitor. A spokesman for Aon said yesterday

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# Thames to step up action on leaks

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THAMES WATER yesterday pledged more action on leakage but started to square up early for a potential clash with the regulator over the next pricing review.

Thames, which is forced to report regularly to Ofwat over leakage, said it would meet new targets for 1998-99, though it said that leakage levels demanded dipped slightly below what it thought was economic. The company is being asked to cut back leakage to 781 million litres a day from its present target of 1.08 billion. Bill Alexander, chief executive, said an economic level would be about 800 million litres a day.

Ofwat has changed the way

in which it gauges leakage. It does not measure leakage rates, making improvements and comparisons between companies less easy to gauge. When it last compiled such figures, for 1995-96, Thames had the worst record at 38 per cent. The company declined to say what its rate was now but said there had been a 10 per cent improvement in the six months to September 30.

Thames fired a warning at Ian Byatt, the regulator, over his plans for a one-off price cut in the review set for 2000. While the company said it did not object to a one-off price cut — which would be set with a running inflation-linked control — it said it would not accept a cut at the level currently being discussed. Mr Byatt has not set a figure yet for the one-off cut, but it is thought that he could go for a cut of about 10 per cent.

Shares in Thames fell 37p to 873p yesterday as the company announced interim pre-tax profits of £232 million — a 7 per cent rise on a year earlier. One analyst blamed profit-taking after a strong run, but there are also fears in the City over the amount Thames will have to spend on getting to grips with leakage. There had also been some expectation that the rise in the interim dividend might have been larger than the 11.6 per cent that Thames delivered. Thames will pay 12.5p a share on February 3.

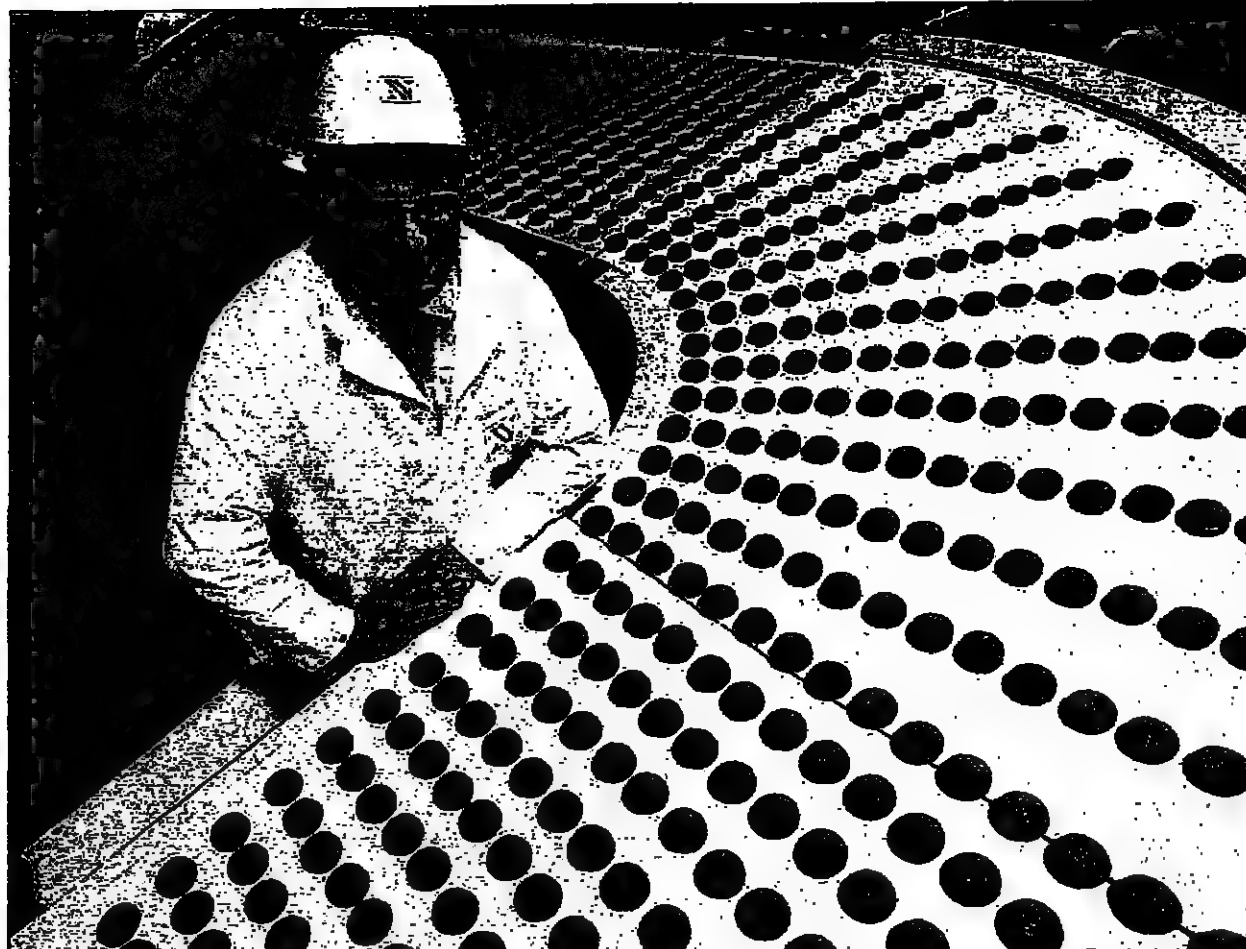
The company could be poised to inject about £20 million back into the business as its spending on the restructuring programme outlined in 1995-96 runs short of the £95 million that it earmarked for the exercise. It will decide by the end of the year.

## Westbury confident of demand

WESTBURY, the house-builder, said demand for new homes remained strong despite successive increases in interest rates. Yesterday the company reported a rise in first-half pre-tax profits to £13.5 million from £9.7 million, with a 10 per cent increase in the average selling price to £83,600 during the period.

Geoffrey Maddrell, chairman, said: "Demand for new homes remains strong, with affordability at an historically high level despite interest rate rises."

Earnings rose to 10.3p (7.4p) a share; the dividend for the six months to August 31, 10 per cent up to 2.36p, is due on January 5.



icing on the cake: Henry Roberts, chief executive of Northumbrian Fine Foods, the manufacturer of biscuits and cakes, served up a 24 per cent rise in pre-tax

profits to £509,000 for the six months to September 30. Earnings were 0.83p a share (0.67p) and the interim dividend is doubled to 0.1p a share. The company

said the second half had started with a substantial increase in Christmas orders. Despite a competitive market further growth in the full year is expected.

## Beckett wins investment role

By PHILIP HARRITT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR has backed Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, in a Whitehall row over which government department carries out a key role in channeling inward investment in Britain from foreign-owned

companies. The Prime Minister's decision marks a significant victory for Mrs Beckett in a protracted inter-departmental Whitehall turf war.

Supporters of John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, were keen on his Department of Transport, Environment and the Regions taking on the responsibility for guiding key

inward investor companies from the US, Japan, Korea, Germany and elsewhere towards setting up in particular regions of Britain.

Mr Prescott will publish a White Paper on regional development next month proposing the establishment of new Regional Development Agencies and his supporters want

ed the new regional bodies to take over responsibility for directing inward investment.

But the Prime Minister has decided that responsibility should remain with the Industrial Development Unit in Mrs Beckett's Department of Trade and Industry — and that the role of the IDU on inward investment should be enhanced.

Under present arrangements, foreign companies work initially through the IDU, which puts them in touch with local agencies, including development

## Set-top decoder bids invited

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

DIGITAL terrestrial television (DTT) in the UK moved a step closer yesterday as manufacturers were invited to tender for contracts to supply set-top box decoders and at the same time industry-wide

specifications were agreed for the technology.

The developments should help to ensure that at least 30 DTT channels can be launched by the end of next year — channels that can be received with a conventional television set and without the need for satellite dishes or

cable connections. British Digital Broadcasting, the main commercial DTT operator, yesterday called on manufacturers to tender for a "substantial" initial order for the decoders needed to receive the pictures. The initial order is likely to be worth about £250 million in total.

But under Mrs Beckett's new proposals representatives from all regions will now have a role inside the IDU, which will in effect play a key part in deciding in which areas of the UK an investment should go.

The move was announced yesterday to the Trade and Industry Select Committee.

## Hygiene test unveiled as Celsis cuts losses

By PAUL DURMAN

CELSIS INTERNATIONAL, the contamination testing company that is close to profit, has developed a simple, colour-based test for checking hygiene standards in restaurants and the home.

Celsis is refusing to discuss the nature of sureWipe, its product, while it awaits patent protection. However, Arthur Holden, chief executive, believes sureWipe offers Celsis exciting opportunities to develop new markets in restaurants and the home.

He said the product is cheaper, much easier to use and offers equal performance to systemSURE, the company's portable monitor. Celsis hopes to launch sureWipe next summer, extending it to consumer markets in 1999.

Celsis said it was "moving rapidly towards profitability". Results for the six months to September 30 showed pre-tax losses reduced from £2.7 million to £850,000 on sales 70 per cent higher at £7 million. About half the £2.9 million growth in turnover came from last year's acquisition of Lumac, a rival.

The company has sold more than 3,150 of its instruments and expects substantial sales growth of the reagents needed to make them work. Reagents offer higher margins and nine million a year are sold.

## NatWest to close down Hong Kong operation

RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

NATWEST embarked on an overhaul of its investment banking operation yesterday by announcing the closure of its debt business in Hong Kong with the loss of 55 jobs.

A spokeswoman for NatWest Markets said the remaining 50 employees based in Hong Kong would be transferred to Tokyo or Singapore, where its global debt business will be relocated over the next three to five months.

"Our clients have been informed of the restructuring which will allow us to focus our presence outside Hong Kong," she said, adding that it was not possible to put a figure on the cost of the reorganisation.

NatWest Markets' withdrawal of its debt business from Hong Kong — it retains an equities business there — is the result of an ongoing strategic review begun in April when Chip Kruger took the helm at the investment bank.

Last week NatWest snubbed an unsolicited offer for its equities business from Deutsche Morgan Grenfell. The bank said DMG's offer, reportedly £150 million for a business valued by City analysts at £300 million, was not in the interests of shareholders.

## Bupa wants £3bn of VAT spent on NHS

THE biggest medical insurer in the UK has called on the Government to use £3 billion of revenue raised via VAT to help to fund the National Health Service. Bupa said yesterday that ringfencing a proportion of VAT revenues and investing it in hospitals and healthcare would be the equivalent of spending an extra 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product on the NHS.

The call came from Sir Terence English, chief medical adviser to Bupa and a former President of the Royal College of Surgeons, at a debate on public healthcare in London. Sir Terence added: "An increase in funding of the NHS should be accompanied by a policy of educating the public as to what might reasonably be expected from it. No country will ever be rich enough to afford all that medical science is capable of providing."

His call came as health insurers revealed that demand for private medical insurance policies has been flat since the general election, and a number of older policyholders had not renewed their insurance after the removal of tax relief on medical insurance for the over 60s. The tax relief, which was scrapped in Gordon Brown's first Budget, was costing the Exchequer £140 million a year.

## Abbey jobs for Belfast

ABBEY NATIONAL is to create 438 jobs in Belfast by investing £54 million in a new software centre and the development of its telephone centre in the Province. The Industrial Development Corporation is putting up £3.3 million towards the cost of the two projects by offering "selective financial assistance" to Abbey National. The bank intends to spend £1.3 million to set up a financial software and development centre, providing about 100 jobs, mostly at the graduate level.

## Rolls wins £127m order

ROLLS-ROYCE is to supply Trent engines for up to 19 Air Canada aircraft in a deal worth about US\$213 million (£127 million) initially. The engines will power the nine Airbus A330-300 aircraft that Air Canada agreed to buy in August. The airline has options on ten more of the aircraft. If it takes up these options, the engine deal could be worth \$450 million to Rolls-Royce, which beat off competition from GE and Pratt & Whitney to secure the contract. Air Canada is the fourteenth Trent engine customer.

## Powerscreen ahead

POWERSCREEN INTERNATIONAL, the engineer, has reported a 16 per cent rise in its pre-tax profits for the six months to September 30, as sales growth in North America, the UK and the Irish Republic made up for a fall in turnover in continental Europe. The profits of £23.6 million included about £500,000 contributed by the Doggett business, bought earlier this year. Turnover was up 13 per cent, to £17 million. An interim dividend of 3.1p (2.8p) is to be paid on February 12.

## Hays pays £17m for DEI

HAYS, the business services group, has acquired DEI Group, a document management company serving government departments and the corporate sector, for £17 million. DEI earned operating profits of £1.4 million in 1996. At the year end net assets were £1.7 million and net debt was £1.3 million. Hays, which has its headquarters in Guildford, Surrey, has spent more than £100 million on acquisitions in recent weeks, including the £65 million purchase of ICS, a mailing business.

## Cookson sells Anzon

COOKSON GROUP, the UK industrial materials company, has sold its US antimony products business to Great Lakes Chemical Corp for \$90 million (£34.5 million). Anzon, which was part of Cookson's plastics division, makes fire retardant additives for the plastics industry and has operations in the UK, US, Mexico and South Africa. Cookson said the disposal makes a pre-tax profit of £20 million. The company's gearing will fall to about 25 per cent. The sale takes Cookson out of the plastic additives business altogether.

## Sales surge for Adidas

ADIDAS, the German manufacturer of sports goods, lifted net profits 33.7 per cent to DM449 million (£155 million) in the first nine months of 1997, helped by a strong advance in sales in North America. Group sales rose 42.3 per cent to DM5,284 billion. Sales in North America rose 58 per cent to DM1,288 billion. Sales in Europe, which remains the company's principal market, rose 31 per cent to DM3,359 billion. In September, Adidas unveiled plans to buy Salomon, the French winter sports equipment group.

## Sims rises after shake-up

SIMS FOOD GROUP, the supplier of meat products to the food services sector that is emerging from a period of extensive restructuring, lifted pre-tax profits to £1.04 million from £710,000 in the six months to September. Turnover from continuing operations rose to £22.7 million from £18.1 million. After the disposal of Sims's retail business borrowings were reduced by £12.8 million in the first half. Earnings were 2.1p (1.7p) a share. There is again no interim dividend but a final dividend may be paid.

## Meyer expands tool hire

MEYER INTERNATIONAL is to acquire 22 tool hire and catering equipment hire branches from Torex to further expand the specialist tool hire business of its Jewson subsidiary in the South West of England. The Torex branches had 1996 sales of £6.1 million and earned profits of £865,000 before interest and tax. Last month Meyer announced the £38 million acquisition of the Harcourts chain of builders' merchants from Harrisons & Crossfield, to be part-funded through a £111.7 million rights issue.

## Cadbury cuts US jobs in new cola-war manoeuvre

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

CADBURY SCHWEPES is restructuring its US operations to protect ambitious targets for profit growth and to win back market share from Coca-Cola and Pepsi.

Dr Pepper/Seven Up Inc, Cadbury's biggest operating division, is shedding more than 100 head office staff to cut costs. The 10 per cent cut will not affect the marketing and advertising departments, which are at the heart of the cola wars, a spokesman said.

Sales of Dr Pepper, Seven Up, Schweppes and other Cadbury brands have been slipping this year, while Coke's Sprite, a direct competitor, has increased its market share.

The success of the head office cost-cutting and a Seven Up relaunch may determine the fate of John Sunderland, the Cadbury chief executive. He has promised the City to increase profits by at least 10 per cent a year.

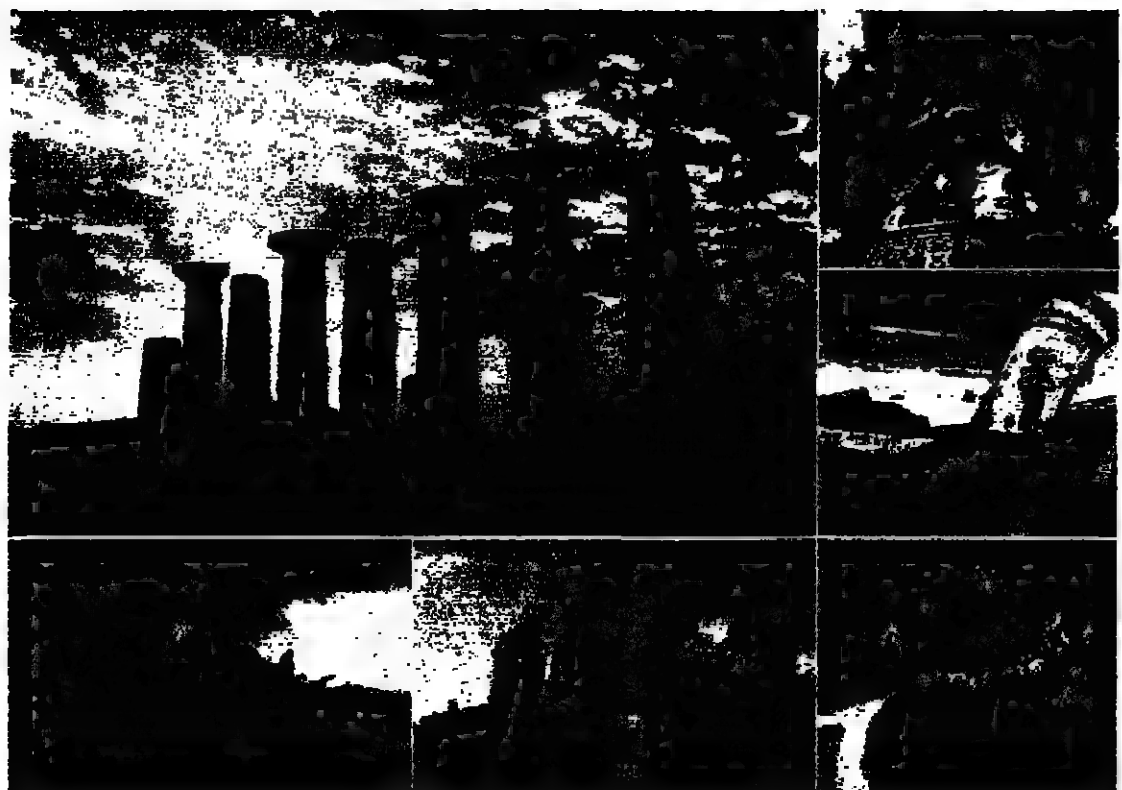
Cadbury acquired Dr Pepper/Seven Up two years ago for £1.6 billion in the hope of rivaling Coke and Pepsi in their home market. However, it has failed to exceed a market share of 15 per cent, with sales

growth of only 1 per cent in a market growing at 3 per cent. The average American drinks 900 cans of soft drink a year, 43 per cent of them Coke brands and 31 per cent Pepsi brands. Rivalry between drinks companies has intensified recently. To regain the initiative in the cola war, Cadbury has relaunched its Seven Up drink after making its taste closer to Coke's sourer and more successful Sprite.

Cadbury, unlike Coke and Pepsi, owns no US bottling plants. Analysts believe that it will be forced to buy bottlers.



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Austria S	21.41
Belgium F	65.03
Canada C	2.48
Cyprus Cyp	0.897
Denmark K	11.53
France F	6.57
Germany D	10.17
Italy L	3.08
Japan Y	1.17
South Korea W	13.86
Spain P	16.3
Sweden K	13.47
Switzerland S	2.28
Taiwan N	31.776
USA \$	1.790
UK £	1.00

Notes for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to transfer of cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



# St Michael heads for promised land



COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor

Sir Richard Greenbury's contempt for teenage scribblers, both in the media and the City, always adds a frisson of excitement to the publication of Marks & Spencer's figures. Yesterday, he was in cracking form, lambasting those who did not fully appreciate the M&S achievements or might not have fully understood the group's ambitions.

The scale of neither should be underestimated. Sir Richard's tendency to interpret any criticism of the company as a personal slight tends to encourage a touch of bear-baiting but the fact is that his reign at M&S has been remarkable. Profits have doubled since he took over as chairman six years ago and now, in terms of its return on sales, the company beats any international rival.

Retaining that position in a hugely competitive market is tough, but M&S is succeeding. If initial reaction to its 5 per cent profits growth was disappointment, it was more due to unreasonable expectations than a rational appreciation of how the company had coped. And if Sir Richard had hoped for a whoop of surprise and a boost to the shares because of his expansion programme, then he would have done better to have kept them under wraps for a great unveiling rather than let them seep into the weekend press.

Nonetheless, the plans do deserve applause. They mean that

three years from now, a quarter of the group's floorspace will be outside the UK, well on the way to qualifying the company for the fashionable designation of being a "global" operator. And while M&S is adamant that it has plenty of scope to grow in the UK, the pace of growth can only be maintained into the future if new markets are broached.

That may mean new formats as well as new territories. Do not forget that M&S discovered financial services long before the supermarkets did. It took its time, but can now book a £100 million profit from that sector. The new catalogue business will also develop gradually, but has long-term potential to bring in new customers.

Sir Richard intends to see that potential realised. Now 61, he is intent on staying firmly at the helm of M&S until he reaches 65. Those City scribblers who have pondered on who will succeed him are apparently to be left to ponder, for he sees no need to clarify the position yet.

Suggestions that he might become a non-executive chairman always seemed to defy the nature of the beast, so there is no need for the appointment of a chief executive to work alongside

him. Sir Richard's decision to stay in office until he is 65 seems to militate against Keith Oates, his current deputy, stepping into his shoes.

The competition now must concentrate on the younger generation of M&S directors. Insiders say that Peter Salisbury, the joint managing director whose raft of responsibilities range from property to personnel, may eventually be given St Michael's blessing.

## It's politics, stupid

If the British Government was ever in any doubt about the intensely political nature of the EMU exigencies, then yesterday's decision by the French Government to put forward its own candidate for Governor of the European Central Bank should shatter any illusions. Gordon Brown talked

only last week about taking a "constructive" approach to a single currency and making vital decisions on the basis of sound economics. The French have duly responded with a strong dose of destructive realpolitik.

The French Government is desperate to derail the campaign to install Wim Duisenberg, current head of the European Monetary Institute, as the first Central Bank Governor. Mr Duisenberg has the virtues of being popular and respected in the markets and is acceptable to the vast majority of European Union members. But as far as the French are concerned he is too close to the Germans for comfort — after all, anyone who wins the German-based "European Banker of the year" award must be suspect.

After giving in to the Germans over the siting of the ECB in Frankfurt and the establishment of a stability pact, Gallic pride cannot countenance any further loss of influence. The French are

frightened that under Mr Duisenberg, the ECB will become a model of the Bundesbank under German domination.

France's chosen candidate, Jean-Claude Trichet, Governor of the Bank of France, is also well respected in the markets but is highly unlikely to prove acceptable to German public opinion. The suspicion is that M Trichet, who is no great ally of President Chirac, is merely a decoy candidate designed to stop Duisenberg. When deadlock ensues, the French will suddenly pull a compromise candidate out of their chapeau. Step forward Michel Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, who has a vast wealth of experience running major international organisations and whose stock is high due to the IMF's very public involvement in South East Asia. In French eyes, he also has the ultimate virtue of being French. Alternatively, the French may be

trying to extract some other policy concession from the Germans. France has made no secret of its desire to see greater political control over the ECB. What ever the ultimate plan, it is going to be a tough and exciting battle before a final decision on the ECB Governor is reached next May. But Gordon Brown should take note — economics it isn't.

## Eddie can afford to be steady

Today was marked down in money-watchers' diaries three months ago as a big meeting of the Bank of England's new monetary committee. In August, the Bank put base rates up a quarter point to 7 per cent and added riders. It reckoned this last adjustment of a series was enough to get inflation back on target on the facts at the time.

Barring earthquakes, the Bank also intended to leave rates unchanged until it pored over the economic tea-leaves again. That meant the next quarterly Inflation Report, which should now be at hand. All too often, however, decisive moments marked up by the markets in advance turn out to have no great signifi-

cance when they arrive. This looks to be a case in point.

In three months, the exchange rate has dipped 3 per cent but buoyancy has left the stock market even if the FTSE 100 index is little changed. Money is still expanding too fast but retail sales have stalled, maybe due to the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, maybe not. Interest rates are up a shade in Germany, whose policies the Bank seeks to parallel, but not yet in the US.

Three months of new information has not, on the whole, added much to the wisdom of those responsible for setting UK interest rates. So the sensible course seems to be to take no action after the meeting finishes tomorrow. One thing is certain: any change would surprise the financial markets. That might bring out the devil in some committee members, but surely not in steady Eddie George.

## Swiss timing

JUST a week more nail biting to go down at Canary Wharf then. Well, not quite. In macho mood, Barclays has now set a timetable for CSFB to complete the BZW deal. But what happens if, having looked a little more closely, CSFB decides that, perhaps, it is not that keen after all? All over the City, bankers are gloating over the predicament that Barclays finds itself in, but they are silent on what the bank should do if the CSFB deal fails.

# Far East crisis fails to disrupt BP's strategy

By CARL MORTIMER

BRITISH PETROLEUM is to continue to invest heavily in the Far East in spite of recent market turmoil in the region, the oil company said yesterday as it unveiled an 11 per cent rise in third-quarter profits.

The company will spend up to \$400 million in South-East Asia this year and has plans to expand a polyethylene plant in Indonesia, in spite of that country's financial crisis.

BP's petrochemicals interests in China, Malaysia and Korea, John Browne, chief executive, said that the company's Far East interests were secure. "Our present reading is that the stock market turmoil will not affect demand," he said.

BP's third-quarter replacement cost profit came in near the top end of expectations at \$691 million (£650 million) thanks to a strong performance from the downstream chemicals and refining and marketing businesses. Mr Browne said that BP had already exceeded its target of \$300 million in performance improvements for the year, with a \$450 million gain in hand. BP expects to have achieved, by the end of the year, more than \$1 billion of its \$1.5 billion programme of performance enhancements, and Mr Browne promised that



John Browne, chief executive, saw BP lift profits 11 per cent

new targets would be set in the spring.

BP's upstream oil and gas business suffered from a fall in oil production, leaving third-quarter exploration and production profits down from

£761 million to £674 million. Effects of a 3 per cent decline in oil output and a \$2 fall in the oil price were only partly offset by higher gas production. Delay in bringing on stream the Foinaven field,

west of the Shetlands, has cost BP some 40,000 barrels per day of lost production.

Mr Browne said that BP would, over the next 12 months, bring on stream ten oil and gas fields, capable of boosting production by 400,000 barrels of oil and gas equivalent per day. He said that capital expenditure was rising and would increase debt from the current \$6 billion to nearer \$7 billion. "Our view is that competition is on the march everywhere," he said.

BP's refining and marketing result was up 82 per cent on the previous year to £265 million for the quarter, with significant gains from the BP/Mobil joint venture and higher refining margins in the US. Mr Browne predicted that BP would achieve post-tax gains of \$200 million from the joint venture by the end of the year. Overall volumes were up 10 per cent worldwide, but BP still cannot sell the Lavera refinery in France. The company expects the French strikes to affect deliveries by the end of the week.

Chemicals profits rose from £130 million to £137 million because of higher volumes; capacity additions helped to boost production 11 per cent.

The quarterly dividend is maintained at 5.5p per share.

Tempos, page 30

## Researcher runs TV test in Canada

By RAYMOND SNOODY  
MIRIAM EINTON

TAYLOR NELSON AGB, the UK's largest market research group, is returning to the North American television ratings measuring market a decade after the first effort by the old AGB business ended in financial disaster.

The UK company has been in talks with NBC, the US network company, which is interested in seeing competition developing to AC Nielsen, the dominant US television ratings operator.

This time, a move into North America is being made cautiously with a pilot scheme in the Vancouver area. Taylor Nelson is urging NBC to extend this to Seattle, across the US border, which is served by common broadcasting stations.

## Brokers bypass volatile Sets

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

CITY brokers are bypassing Sets, the Stock Exchange's new order-driven share trading system, in favour of conventional trading over the telephone.

Amid extreme volatility in the market, brokers are using Sets for less than 40 per cent of trades in FTSE 100 shares. On Monday that figure fell to just 33 per cent.

Brokers have been deterred in part from using Sets because of a series of technical difficulties, such as unusually wide spreads on share prices, particularly at the opening of trade, and low liquidity.

A Stock Exchange spokeswoman, however, said it was happy with the level of trades going through the order book. She said the exchange never expected to clinch 100 per cent of business, but declined to put a figure on its target ceiling.

Yesterday the exchange lifted the threshold for an automatic ten-minute suspension of a share from a 10 per cent difference in bid and offer prices to 20 per cent. It said the change had been made "in the light of experience".

Traders said the jury was still out on Sets, particularly given the volatility of markets. Martin Lupton, of Dresner Kleinwort Benson's equities division, said: "It's only been working for two-and-a-half weeks so it's too early to call. Give it three months, then see if the spreads are still wide."

David Smith, co-head of equities trading at Merrill Lynch, said wide spreads in the lower reaches of the FTSE 100 were a fair reflection of the way business has always been done in these stocks. "The yellow strip was a bit of an illusion," he said.

## Tradepoint deals soar to £361.9m

By ADAM JONES

MONTHLY trading figures released by Tradepoint, the electronic market set up to do battle with the London Stock Exchange, suggest a significant increase in the number of share trades in October.

The total traded value claimed by the company soared from £98.3 million to £361.9 million, it was announced yesterday.

However, a Tradepoint spokeswoman said the figure includes reports of trades through interdealer brokers, who act as middlemen between market-makers.

These bring in substantially less revenue since the loss-making Tradepoint cut charges on October 20.

The spokeswoman would not say how many there were in October but they are likely to have grown significantly in number.

## Real-life lessons on the hard sell

By CHRIS AYRES

HARD-UP students are being targeted by Betterware, the door-to-door housewares retailer, to become part-time distributors, a job traditionally associated with housewives and pensioners.

The company, which is launching a major recruitment drive on university campuses, says low levels of unemployment have made recruitment difficult, and that students struggling to make ends meet are ideal candidates.

Peter Hartley, Betterware's managing director, said: "Students want time and will work for two to three hours a day, earning £40 to £50 a week. Obviously they also have to do the odd bit of study."

Pre-tax profits fell 17.4 per

cent in the 28 weeks to September 13, from £6.6 million to £5.5 million, mainly because of a £1.2 million VAT adjustment. Turnover rose slightly from £32 million to £33.8 million, while earnings per share fell from 4.2p to 3.5p. An interim dividend of 1.05p (1p) will be paid on January 5.

Betterware said it would continue to develop joint ventures with Avon, the door-to-door beauty products retailer, especially in the Far East and Eastern Europe. It shrugged off the threat of Internet shopping as a problem for at least five years.

Betterware attributed a disappointing performance on customers objecting to catalogues immediately after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

## Braas family close to a bid for RBB

By PAUL DUBMAN

THE minority shareholders in Redland Braas Building are close to making an offer for the roofing business, Lehman Brothers, their advisers, said last night.

RBB holds the key to the fate of Redland, the building materials company that is struggling to defeat a £1.67 billion offer from Lafarge, the French cement and concrete group. Helga Bruhn-Braas, the Braas family's representative on Redland's board, resigned yesterday to concentrate on preparing the bid for RBB.

Kyril Saxe-Coburg at Lehman Brothers said: "It's imminent. There are still a few moving parts. We are obviously spending 24 hours a day on this to make sure we get there."

City estimates have suggest-

ed Redland's 56.5 per cent stake in RBB is worth about £800 million. Mr Saxe-Coburg said the Braas family, which still owns 31.5 per cent of RBB, will make its offer jointly with Schwenk and Dyckerhoff, the two German cement companies that own the remaining 12 per cent of RBB's shares.

Rudolph Agnew, Redland chairman, is willing to sell any or all of the company's businesses to extract a better deal for shareholders.

Mrs Bruhn-Braas's conflict of interest prevented her from signing Redland's defence document last week. Under the terms of the RBB deal, the Braas family can match any offer for the business should Redland want to sell. Redland shares fell 5½p to 329½p.

## Mature taste lifts Dairy Crest

By DOMINIC WALSH

DAIRY CREST, the former processing arm of the old Milk Marketing Board, is reaping the benefits of a growing consumer taste for more mature cheddar cheese. John Houlston, chief executive, said the UK's mature and farmhouse cheddar sector was worth more than £500 million, having risen 5 per cent in the first half of the year.

Dairy Crest, which came to the stock market just over a year ago, has a 35 per cent market share through its Cathedral City and Cathedral Davidstow and Cathedral City brands, which sell at



John Houlston served up an increase in pre-tax profits

between £6.50 and £8 a kilogram, compared with about £3 for mild cheddar.

Cathedral City's volumes were up almost a third in the half year to September 30.

That performance helped the group to push up pre-tax profits from £16.5 million to £18.7 million, from turnover 3 per cent better at £392 million. Its consumer foods division,

which includes Clover dairy spread, reported a 14 per cent rise in operating profit to £14.7 million, while food services dipped from £6.4 million to £5.4 million, reflecting the effect of the strong pound on ingredients markets.

Competition meant milk sales to supermarkets dipped, despite volume growth of 8 per cent, although lower costs meant profits rose in the declining doorstep market.

Earnings per share rose to 11.5p (10.5p) and an interim dividend of 3.5p (3.26p) will be paid on January 22.

Tempos, page 30





# Broker's top ten rating sets Next shares jumping

THE best performer among the top 100 companies was Next, after leading City commentators predicted a revival in the fortunes of the high street retailer.

The price rebounded 47p to 734p on turnover of almost 2.7 million shares after Morgan Stanley decided to include Next in its list of top ten buys. Word is that it has also been included in a US broker's buy list. This is likely to encourage a fresh wave of institutional support.

At the same time, other brokers such as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson were urging clients to switch out of Marks & Spencer, down 10p at 600p, and into Next. This followed yesterday's disappointing interim results and in spite of a pledge by M&S to spend £2.1 billion on a major expansion programme.

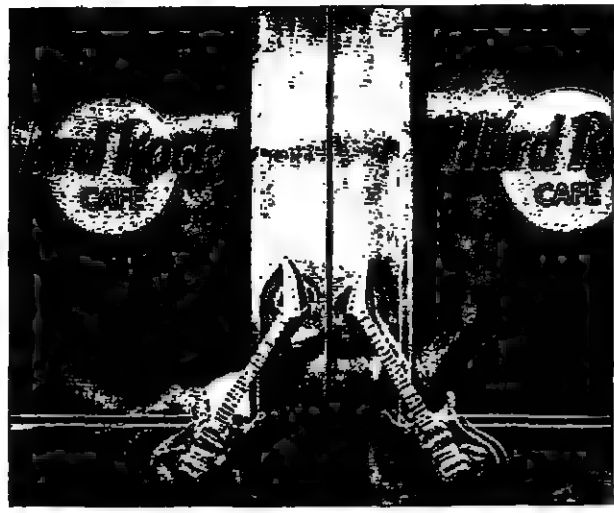
Next had suffered a setback on Monday after Charterhouse Tilney, the broker, cast doubts over the group's earnings potential during 1997. Recent figures also disappointed the market, with like-for-like sales down August showing only modest improvement.

The rest of the equity market spent a lacklustre session, choosing to dwell on the overnight setback for the Hang Seng of 474 points. The 232-point surge in the Dow Jones industrial average was ignored by investors, instead, bracing themselves for opening falls when New York resumed trading last night.

As a result, the FTSE 100 index endured a 51-point turnaround to close 90 down at 4,897.4. Trading was again thin, with just 739 million changing hands.

There are signs that the speculators are starting to get cold feet in Redland, currently the subject of a 30p a share offer from Lafarge, the French group. The price has been as high as 340p, with the speculators pinning their hopes on a counter-bid. Last night the price slipped 44p to 329p and now stands just 9p above the terms from Lafarge. The Redland board may be hard-pressed to improve on the deal already on the table.

That overnight hiccup for the Hang Seng in Hong Kong again hit those companies with close connections to the Far East. HSBC tumbled 59p to £14.93, Standard Chartered was down 12p at 656p and Cable & Wireless 8p off

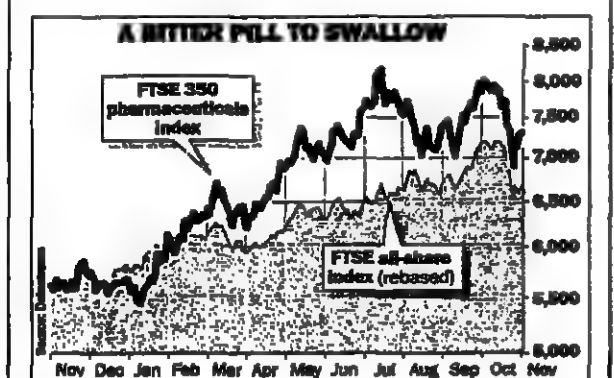


Shares in Rank, owner of Hard Rock Cafe, firmed 1 1/2p

at 473p. Even Slebe was 17p down at £11.66, reflecting its exposure to Asia, along with Unilever, 3 1/2p off at 451p.

Senior Engineering slipped 1 1/2p to 163 1/2p as a party of brokers began a tour of the group's US operations.

Whitbread was a nervous market, slipping 15p to 790p ahead of half-year figures later today. Brokers are looking for pre-tax profits of £196 million



INVESTORS are becoming increasingly choosy about which stock to buy — even when it comes to blue chips. Yesterday saw a case in point, with Zeneca ending 43p lower, at £18.52, after a meeting with ABN Amro Hoare Govett on Monday. The broker is reported to have cut its target price from £17 to £15.50. By contrast, Glaxo Wellcome rose 27p, to £13.07, after SBC Warburg, the broker, told clients to "add" to their holdings.

Kevin Scotcher, of NatWest Securities, is not surprised. He says: "If you

look back to the beginning of the year, Glaxo and SmithKline Beecham have both outperformed Zeneca. In fact, Zeneca has badly underperformed."

In these circumstances, it is not the best policy for investors to adopt blanket coverage. "In a sector which has reached its all-time high and has since come off, currently standing 9 per cent below its relative high, you have to learn to stock pick," says Mr Scotcher.

That necessity, he says, becomes more acute during periods of volatility.

Rank Group firmed 1 1/2p to 336p as the company began a two-day tour of its leisure activities with a party of brokers. They will visit Butlins, Hard Rock Cafe and the bingo operations.

Holmes Place proved it was no slouch at the start of first-time dealings. The health and fitness centres group saw its shares placed at 129p, with the price opening at 147 1/2p. It closed at its best of the day with a rise of 42p at 170p on turnover of 3.4 million shares.

News of a bid approach lifted Wellman, the thermal engineer and garage operator, 6 1/2p to 37p.

A warning about the outcome for the year as a whole left Betterware nursing a fall of 1p at 88p. **GILT-EDGED:** Prices traded in narrow limits for much of the session before closing mixed. Investor sentiment remained preoccupied with tomorrow's decision on interest rates.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt finished three ticks better at £118 1/2 after trading in limits of £118 1/2 to £119 1/2. The total number of contracts completed reached 72,000.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 put on seven ticks at £18 1/2, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 shed £1 1/2 at £10 1/2.

**NEW YORK:** Wall Street stocks were lower after a volatile morning as the market sought a footing in the wake of the previous day's big run-up and Hong Kong's overnight drop. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 13.50 lower at 7,660.89.

## New York (midday):

Dow Jones 7660.89 (-13.50)  
S&P Composite 937.22 (-1.77)

Tokyo  
Nikkei Average 16500.30 (+41.80)

Hong Kong  
Hang Seng 10788.78 (-494.38)

Amsterdam  
EOE index 866.95 (-13.82)

Sydney  
AO 2551.00 (-62.00)

Frankfurt  
DAX 3912.45 (-14.62)

Singapore  
Straits 1711.75 (+0.11)

Brussels  
General 13434.76 (+41.62)

Paris  
CAC-40 2774.90 (-33.00)

Zurich  
SIX Gen 11552.43 (+9.3)

London:  
FT 30 3179.9 (+0.8)  
FTSE 100 4897.4 (-51.0)  
FTSE 250 4674.8 (-11.2)  
FTSE 350 2366.1 (-2.3)  
FTSE All-Share 2316.92 (-1.00)  
FTSE New Financials 231.17 (-1.82)  
FTSE Retail Index 132.36 (-0.18)  
FTSE Govt 100.01 (-0.03)  
Bespoke 44118  
SEAG Voltana 739.3m  
US\$ 1.0854 (+0.0008)  
German Mark 2.0022 (+0.011)  
Exchange Index 100.0 (pence)  
Bank of England Official Rate (4.25%)  
ESCU 1.4780  
ECU 1.2000  
RPI 1993 Sep (2.0%) Jan 1997-100  
RPIX 1993 Sep (2.7%) Jan 1997-100

Asset Mgmt Zero 101% + 1/2

Buckland Inv Wts 10 ...

Buckland Investments 17% ...

Holmes Place 170 ...

Letchways (159) 167% ...

Letchways City 92% ...

Macdonough Int 102% ...

Metakrusa 85% ...

MSB Retail Sys 167% ...

Newsquest (250) 234% ...

Nottingham Frst (70) 60% ...

Mycomet AM NV 2180 ...

SHL Group 281% ...

Solihull 190% ...

Submarine 177% ...

Weather Action 98% - 2

Xaar 110 ...

Alvis Units n/p 16% - 4

Azian n/p (57) 23% - 3

Comway Group n/p 1% - 5

Fourdan T n/p (49) 2% -

Lavendon n/p (265) 37% - 6

Quicks n/p (115) 7% - 4

Recognition Sys n/p 4% -

FRSES:

Liberty 425p (+47 1/2)

Ned 734p (+47 1/2)

Sun Life & Prov 382p (+17 1/2)

Reed Int 605p (+24 1/2)

Stamps Ltd 456p (+17 1/2)

Logica 85p (+25 1/2)

Colson 837p (+10 1/2)

French Com 375p (+10 1/2)

Nat Express 571p (+14 1/2)

Boots 887p (+20 1/2)

FALLS:

Hutch Whamp 415p (-32 1/2)

Scott & New 678p (-25 1/2)

Wessex 465p (-17 1/2)

GUS 215p (-17 1/2)

Kingsley 943p (-19 1/2)

St Airways 576p (-12 1/2)

Whitbread 790p (-15 1/2)

Stuart Chart 950p (-12 1/2)

Marks Spencer 800p (-10 1/2)

Closing Prices Page 32

## Easy to swallow

IN a recent presentation, Aon Corporation showed investors a picture of a snake digesting an elephant. This image, presumably taken from Saint-Exupery, was supposed to represent the broker's ability to absorb recent acquisitions — in particular, Alexander & Alexander. But the real message, Aon said, was that "The snake is still hungry."

The next elephant on the corporate menu could well be Willis Corroon, the UK broker that has long been under pressure from institutions to merge with its rival Sedgwick. Shareholders have become weary of waiting for Willis to deliver earnings growth. They are unlikely to be satisfied by the prospect of savings from more expensive redundancies.

With the share price currently at 124p, there would be some resistance amongst shareholders who bought Willis shares at 175p or even

200p to accept an offer from Aon in the range of 130p to 135p. However, there is little sign that earnings in the UK broking sector are likely to bounce in the short-term. US brokers are ahead of the UK in the art of cost-cutting and upgrading computer systems. Quick to undercut rivals in defence of their market share, this in turn sends commission rates tumbling.

The Willis board, committed to continued independence, has planned its hopes on an upturn in trading conditions. Over the past 12 months there has been precious little evidence that ratings and margins are about to improve. Willis and Sedgwick are too small to compete on a global scale and too big to exploit niche markets. A bid may come before the end of the year and investors might as well hang on. But no one should chase this stock.

## BP

BP's continuing use of the phrase "self-help" to describe its performance improvements may be just a touch self-congratulatory. Of the \$1 billion achieved so far, the company admits that 20 per cent relates to cost savings and the remainder to volume.

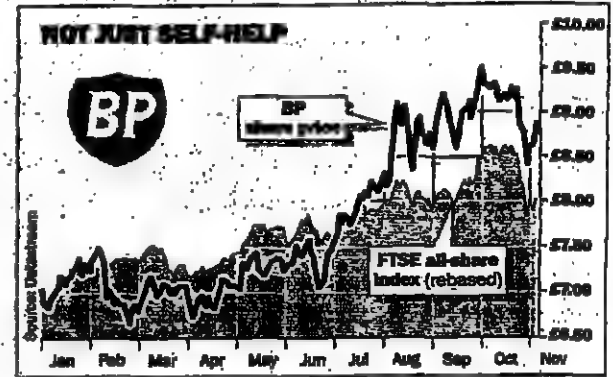
Yet, no one will complain if BP is producing more oil and finding a market for it. The astonishing story of the oil industry in recent years has been the way in which demand has grown to match the exponential increase in supply. The shake-out in the oil price untroubled and there are few signs that energy demand is faltering.

BP is no longer a cost-cutting story, but a business that needs to be judged on its ability to make big investment bets. If there is a gap in

its portfolio, it is in gas, where it is missing out on the high prices currently fetched by the fuel in the US market. However, the gas price is highly volatile and BP is building up its exposure elsewhere.

The big question for BP is whether its projects will enhance or diminish the 17 per cent return that it currently

earns on capital. Planned share buybacks will flatter that number, but shareholders who back BP have the comfort of knowing that it is more committed to shareholder value than some in the industry. Investment in oil and gas is booming, but BP's new-found conservatism could save it from the inevitable disasters to come.



## Dairy Crest

ANY farmer still holding shares in Dairy Crest must feel like the cat who got the cream. Launched at 155p in September 1996 (just as the new issues market was collapsing) the shares have been rising ever since, and yesterday's solid interim figures pushed them another 6p higher to 279p.

The farmers still have 60 per cent of the stock, but should they hang on in what is undoubtedly a tough market? The doorstep pint is an endangered species, accounting for less than a third of all milk sold. And even in the multiple retail sector, where volumes were up 8 per cent, competition and the buying power of the big supermarket chains combined to cancel out the benefits of lower raw milk costs.

Still, management are making the right moves, cutting costs (profits from doorstep deliveries were marginally up) and putting

resources into premium cheese, spreads and fresh dairy products. Talks over the acquisition of Unigate's cheese business appear to have foundered over price, but size is not the inhibitor, with gearing just 16 per cent. Dairy Crest could accommodate a deal.

Assuming profits of £41 million, Dairy Crest is valued on 10.7 times earnings. A marked discount to the food sector, but with the shares still relatively illiquid, they are a hold-rather-than-a-buy.

## Emap

A SAFE pair of hands, is how the succession at Emap is being seen by the City, which marked Emap's shares up as soon as the news came out. Anyone who was surprised by Kevin Hand's appointment as chief executive has not been paying attention to Emap over the past year.

The route was cleared for the Francophile and urbane Hand with almost Byzantine

intrigue. The dynamic duo who spent 20 years building the group up — Robin Miller and David Arculus — seemed to fall out as the succession issue reared its ugly head, prompting Arculus's departure to United taking Tony Tibb, who ran the business publishing side, with him.

This cleared the way for Hand to rise to the top. But what are we to make of Miller's transition to non-executive director. Pric, the pensions consultants that attacked Emap about its succession problems last year, will not recognise him as independent. The temptation to interfere in the running of the business could be overwhelming.

What Emap needs is a transition to a new generation of leaders capable of injecting the energy needed to maintain the momentum that has seen Emap treble in value over the past five years. It may be time to take profits at Emap.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

High	Low	Open	Close	High	Low	Open	Close	High	Low	Open	Close
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101
102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102
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High	Low	Open	Close	High	Low	Open	Close	High	Low	Open	Close
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119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Dec 97	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	71994
Jan 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	36940
Feb 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	92328
Mar 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	14721
Apr 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	1221
May 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	11748
Jun 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	1221
Jul 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	39111
Aug 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	11251
Sep 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	12519
Oct 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Nov 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Dec 98	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Jan 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Feb 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Mar 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Apr 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
May 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Jun 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Jul 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Aug 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Sep 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Oct 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Nov 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627
Dec 99	118.18	118.18	118.18	118.18	627

Base Rates Clearing Status 7 Finance Now 7%	Low 7	Week finish 7%
Discount Market Loans Overnight High: 7%		
Primary Bills (90-day): 7 mths 7 mths 7 mths 7 mths 6 mths		



TEMPUS  
A to swallow

At the heart of the Euro-constellation, shortly to be renamed EMU, yawns a black hole, threatening to suck in any economy which strays into its gravity field. The black hole is called insolvency.

This may, at first sight seem an outrageous statement. Surely, only Third World governments get into such dire straits. Surely insolvency couldn't arise in the heart of Europe? Unfortunately, it could, and all too easily. Sovereign defaults have never so far been a serious threat in the industrial world, not so much because of levels of economic development or supposedly greater fiscal responsibility. Rather, it is because most of the borrowing by Western governments has been denominated in their own domestic currencies. In contrast, Third World nations are often forced to borrow in foreign currency because their domestic capital markets are thin — and in

## The black hole at the heart of Europe

Laurence Copeland says economic and monetary union sets a poverty trap and poses the threat of insolvency

many cases virtually non-existent — and because importers often insist on payment in "hard currency".

Default among countries with largely domestic debts is virtually impossible because the government simply prints more money. Those who finance themselves through foreign debt don't have that option. Now apply this to economic and monetary union. The European Central Bank in Frankfurt will have the sole prerogative of printing euros. So EMU will reduce all its member governments to the status of local authorities as far as their borrowing is concerned.

All government borrowing will effectively be in foreign currency and the threat of default will hang over every member to a greater or lesser degree. Those with relatively

high debt levels and a history of fiscal irresponsibility will have low credit ratings and pay high rates of interest on their loans. More responsible governments will enjoy the benefits of the finest borrowing rates. Despite these variations in perceived credit quality, European interest rates have converged dramatically. Italian bonds are scarcely riskier than those of Germany. The reason is not a suspension of the reality of market forces but realpolitik.

If an insolvent New York City was able to find a saviour even in

the free market heyday of Reagan's presidency, the capital markets are betting that the European authorities will be forced to come to the aid of Italy or Spain, let alone France or Germany, if they are in distress. The pressure to bail out a country with a weak economy — or a weak will — is bound to prove irresistible. Suppose France suffered a funding crisis. Imagine the consequences if Frankfurt ignored French pleas for funds. The air would be thick with the smell of bad blood from old wounds reopened. Ultimately, a bail-out could be the only way to

prevent the EU breaking up amid mutual recriminations or worse. The "no bail-out" clause written into the Maastricht treaty with such a situation in mind would prove as expendable as the convergence criteria as economics were tossed aside for political expediency.

All this would be irrelevant if there was no danger that some in the EMU zone might allow their fiscal affairs to deteriorate to the point of insolvency. But it cannot be ruled out. The almost ubiquitous fiscal incontinence is ominous. Even the threat of exclusion from

EMU has proved insufficient to get their fiscal houses genuinely in order. Only Luxembourg will satisfy the Maastricht borrowing conditions without cooking the books. The predicament of Belgium and Italy is probably beyond the help of statistical massage.

In the run-up to spring 1998 when those fit to join the euro will be chosen, aspiring members had to behave like boxers trying to make the weight for a big fight, with spending cuts and tax increases sold to voters on the implicit or even explicit promise of a post-match blow-out. After 1998, they will revert to the psychology of any sad heavyweight, willpower sapped by the lack of deadline, reliant only on self-discipline.

If countries haven't tightened

their belts with EMU as the prize, what hope is there when the prize has already been won? These are the sort of considerations that motivated the stability pact, the patently unworkable German proposal for a system of fines on profligate EMU members. The idea of some kind of European traffic cop pinning fiscal speeding tickets on offending governments strains credulity. EMU is already unpopular without telling voters that it involves sacrificing national autonomy in fiscal as well as monetary policy.

If the stability pact proves unworkable, as it almost certainly will, EMU members will face a stark choice: either to overspend, or to finance the overspending of the other member indefinitely. This is less a case of moral hazard, more like Europe's national poverty trap.

Laurence Copeland is Professor of Finance at Cardiff Business School. Janet Bush is on holiday.

## One way or another, the end is nigh for Britain's shopping boom

The forecasts from Marks & Spencer may be bullish, but Douglas McWilliams says the retail party is over



Shoppers have been out in force this year and a bumper Christmas season is forecast. However, restraint is likely to be the order of the day in early 1998

In the immediate aftermath of the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, I pointed out that there would be a negative impact on retail sales for September. In the event, the 1.9 per cent drop was twice as large as can be attributed solely to what I termed the "Diana effect".

Does this mean that Britain's retailing bonanza is coming to an end?

Retail sales growth has been boosted in the past two years by a potent mixture of rising real incomes, falling unemployment, tax cuts, low interest rates and building society windfalls. At the same time, the virtual disappearance of negative equity in the housing market, a booming stock market and diminishing job insecurity have boosted consumer confidence.

Before the September drop, retail sales were running 10 per cent higher than two years earlier. This is about twice the pace of growth that is sustainable in the long term. The choice, therefore, is between an Eighties-style continuation of the boom until it causes an inflation-driven bust, or a soft landing, with the consumer's spending impulses being moderated at an early stage.

My instinct is that moderation will prevail this time. The windfall bonanza has ended and is unlikely to be repeated on anything like the same scale. During 1997, consumers received £30 billion from windfalls, about 5 per cent of their disposable incomes. Although, as most economists predicted, only about a quarter of this will have been spent during the year, this is still enough to add more than 1 per cent to consumer spending.

The shape of the economic cycle has been especially favourable to disposable incomes in 1997. Prices have been held down by the strength of sterling, while wages and salaries

have edged up as skill shortages have emerged. These factors will remain in 1998, but — unless the pound rises further — the higher exchange rate is a one-off effect on inflation wear off after a year or so.

Another reason for expecting consumer spending growth to slow is politics. With Tony Blair now master of all that he surveys, it is easy to forget that economic policy for most of the 1996-97 period was dominated by a Conservative government trying to win re-election. Taxes were cut by the November Budgets of both 1995 and 1996, and Kenneth Clarke avoided raising interest rates in early 1997 against the advice of most economic experts, including the Bank of England.

Post election, the position has changed. Interest rates are now set by the politically Independent Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England and have been raised four times since the election. If the stock market turmoil of the past week causes the committee to stay its hand at its meeting tomorrow, it remains clear that further increases are on the cards.

The Government's single-minded attitude towards re-election means that we are likely to be spared the swing-tax increases imposed by previous Labour administrations.

However, taxes and charges will probably edge upwards in the coming years. The combination of the end of windfalls with the swing in the political cycle and slower growth in disposable income means that the consumer boom will have ended by mid-1998. The question of greatest importance to retailers is how soon the boom will unwind. Shelves are being filled for a bumper Christmas spending season this year. If the boom

ends early, this stock will have to be cleared in the January sales at give-away prices.

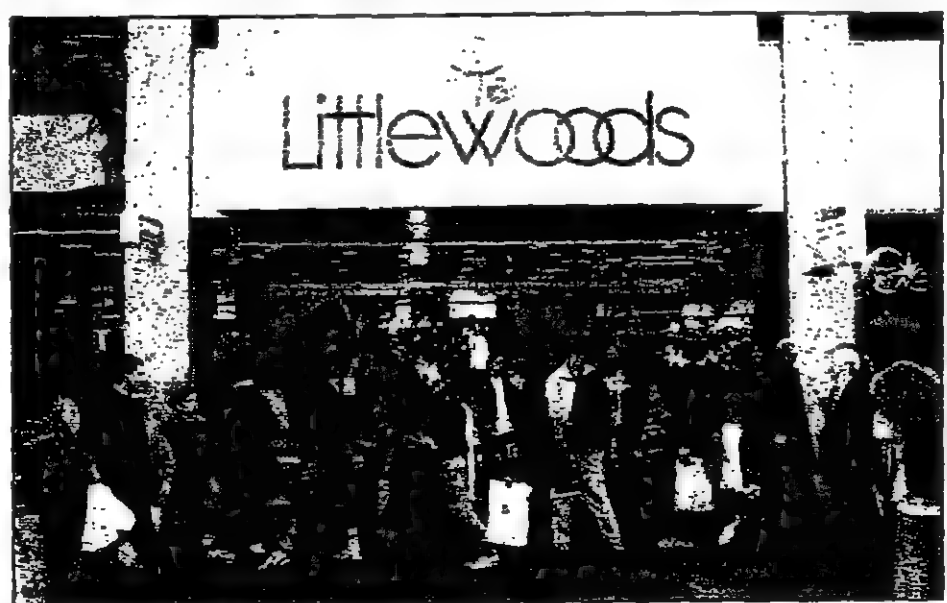
The tool of economic analysis is insufficiently precise to answer this question with certainty. The critical factor will be consumer confidence. Stock market volatility is bad for confidence, especially for senior management and those working in the City. However, barring meltdowns, the remaining influences on confidence are positive. House prices have

risen to the point at which positive equity, rather than negative, has become relevant. Job insecurity remains, but is much less a worry now than when the economy was weak and unemployment was high. The election has resolved political uncertainties.

On balance, therefore, it looks as if a bumper Christmas spending season is in prospect. If this happens, the spending slowdown will start in January. The volume of

goods sold in January is determined by how much is left on the shelves after Christmas — the strength of demand merely determines how low prices have to be cut in order to move the unsold stock. If Christmas sales are high, expect only modest price cuts in January, with sales volumes falling.

It is worth noting that the effects of the end of the consumer spending boom will be differentiated between sectors. Consumer durables, and especially cars, have been particularly affected by windfalls, and sales may even fall in 1998. The travel industry may fare better because sterling's strength is reducing the cost of travel abroad.



Littlewoods failed to thrive in the retail boom, and Marks & Spencer is buying some sites

Perhaps the most buoyant consumer sector for 1998 is likely to be the leisure sector. The slower growth in spending power will do little to hold back the trend for British people to spend more in restaurants, bars, clubs and sports centres.

However, if spending in the high street and shopping centres does not slow down early in 1998, it is a racing certainty that interest rates will be raised to ensure that the bubble is burst later in the year.

Douglas McWilliams is chief executive of the Centre for Economics and Business Research Ltd.

## How the video conference keeps business in the picture

Prices are falling as telecoms groups aim for increased usage. Chris Ayres reports

Video conferencing could yet become the corporate status symbol of the 1990s, a decade behind the mobile phone — now as likely to be used by brickies as stock brokers. Although the equipment involved is still rather clumsy and expensive, manufacturers are currently cutting prices to boost interest in the technology.

In Britain 10,000 businesses are estimated to use video conferencing technology, with more than 250,000 companies using videophones worldwide. Telephone companies confidently predict that within two years videophones will become as common as fax machines.

The term video conferencing was invented to make what is essentially a videophone sound like an important business tool. Marketing gurus would argue that the term videophone carries with it a rather cheap and nasty 1970s sci-fi image. Companies such as BT and CWC — which stand to make a fortune if the technology catches on — want customers to think business, not Barbarella. The battle to

people — and at the same time see and hear what each other is doing. The more expensive systems have much more impressive quality, although they use more telephone lines, thus raising call costs even further. However, for international meetings especially, the money and time saved by using video conferencing can be enormous. Cameras can be panned in and out, and separate fixed units can be used to show close-ups of, say, a microphone.

Those who are sceptical about the practical applications for such systems should look at Mercedes Benz, the German carmaker. Because many Mercedes dealerships are small, they cannot afford to hire their own advisers to sell the company's financial services products. Instead, Mercedes has hired a team of advisers who work from a national video conferencing centre, where they deal with about 50 customers a day. Dealerships have to spend only £3,000 on a BT videophone — a compact screen and phone in one unit — to give their customers immediate access to the company's top financial sales team. Mercedes says it has seen a 25 per cent rise in financial services sales since installing the equipment. It has the added benefit of impressing Mercedes customers and boosting the company's high-tech image. Nissan, another car manufacturer, also uses video conferencing to hold meetings between European sites, and made more than 1,500 calls last year.

Some users look like badly dubbed actors in a kung-fu movie

Video conferencing also allows companies or individuals to work effectively without having to be based in Central London. Attinger Jack Advertising, an agency in Dorset, says video conferencing allows it to compete with multinational agencies in London.

The company says it can dramatically cut the presentation time for new campaigns by using the technology to show video, text and graphics to clients. They can work on campaigns, budgets and schedules without having to travel to London, saving both time and travelling expenses.

The future of video conferencing will ultimately depend on how willing people are to conduct all their business from the same office. For the technology to work, calls must be cheaper than travelling. People's offices will also have to have a great view.

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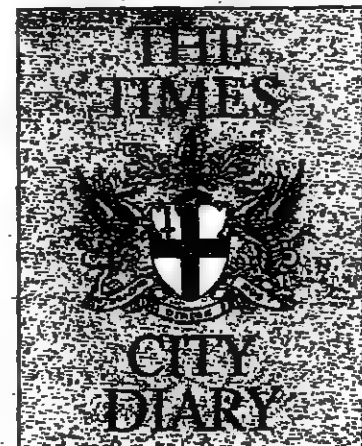
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## Hurn pay

SIR ROGER HURN put Smiths Industries on the map as a business worth £2.7 billion. Yet in November Hurn, who had been chairman and chief executive, brought in Keith Butler-Wheelhouse as chief executive and their apparent. And he has since been busy elsewhere, what with interviewing at Stanhope Gate for a next job as chairman of GEC and engineering the departure of Sean Lance at Glaxo Wellcome, where he is deputy chairman.

Funally enough, this splitting of responsibilities at Smiths does not seem to be reflected in salaries. The accounts just out show that Butler-Wheelhouse pulled in £702,000 all told. For nine months work. Hurn's total pay actually rose by £19,000, to £719,000. Annualise this, and you find that the job that one man did for £700,000 one year, two men were paid £16 million to do the next. Smiths' people mutter about "a handover year". But it does not exactly look like value for money.



● SOME unkind souls in the Liberty camp have been challenging the credentials of Odile Griffith, the charming corporate financier who is advising the Stewart-Liberty family in their spat with the store's management. No mention of her name was found in a recent trawl of the Securities and Futures Authority. Has she been practising the black arts without a licence, some ask? Let me put the record straight. Until last Friday Griffith, although an independent, was employed by NatWest and so registered through them. Now she has shaken off the shackles and runs RKR Corporate Finance, her own business. And from Monday has been registered personally with the SFA. If it's any of your business.

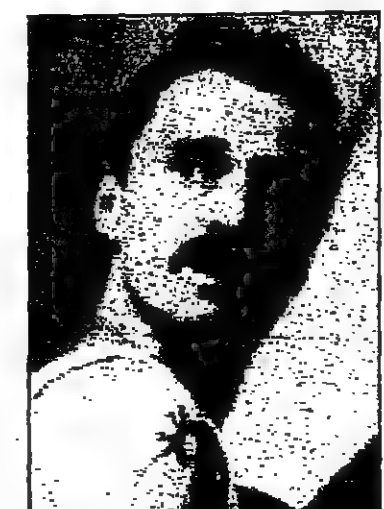
## Namespotting

AN ANNOUNCEMENT of an accounting marriage catches my eye. Buchler Philips Traynor is merging with Begbies — Begbies? Wasn't that the man in *Trainspotting* played by Robert Carlyle who kept hitting people? We'll let it pass — to create ... Begbies Traynor. So gone are the names of Buchler and Philips. We will never hear them in open court again. Like we did that day in July when Buchler Philips, along with Nabarro Nathanson, were castigated by Mr Justice Ferris for their conduct in the Maxwell receivership.

His honour put it thus, did he not?

"Having in this way done my best to set out the figures objectively, I cannot escape saying that I find them profoundly shocking. If the amounts claimed are allowed in full this receivership will have produced substantial rewards for the receivers and their lawyers and nothing at all for creditors of the estate." Funally enough, several other people I know also associate Buchler Philips with that shameful court case. And now the name will disappear, to be replaced with that of a fictional Scottish psychopath. Which some might regard as an improvement.

MARTIN WALLER



Robert Carlyle, who was Begbie in the hit film *Trainspotting*



"We're in luck. M&S is planning to open a branch here soon"

● IS THIS the easiest job on the Euro-gravy train? I have an invitation from Brussels to some awful conference on tourism this week, signed by Bernard Boden, styled "minister for middle classes and tourism of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg". A state whose 147 inhabitants are all resolutely middle class and which no one would want to visit anyway.

## Just 'deserts'

SINCE we are being beastly to foreigners, I see our French chums are up to their old tricks again. No, not closing down every road in France, although I remember a true story from the last stoppage told to me by a British transport firm. Apparently,

the French police would helpfully take over the blocking trucks and look after them whenever the drivers wanted to go off for a three-hour lunch. Anyway, this week is the occasion of the latest International Trade Fair in Baghdad, whose ruler is again trying our patience.

For the first time since the Gulf War, Western firms are there. The British and Americans are not welcome. But there are a few Germans, who did not fight in the war, and a scattering of Italians, who did. The French, our gallant co-belligerents, have turned out in droves. They have taken an entire pavilion, with 40 companies in oil, food, and pharmaceuticals. Serve them right if the place blows up again and Saddam uses them as a human shield.

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ALCAN	52.75	+0.125	1,000	ALCO	10.00	+0.000	500	ALUM	15.50	+0.000	200	ALV	12.00	+0.000	100
AMC	18.00	+0.000	300	AME	25.00	+0.000	400	AMG	30.00	+0.000	600	AMH	40.00	+0.000	800
AMI	50.00	+0.000	1,000	AMJ	60.00	+0.000	1,200	AMK	70.00	+0.000	1,400	AML	80.00	+0.000	1,600
AMN	90.00	+0.000	1,800	AMO	100.00	+0.000	2,000	AMP	110.00	+0.000	2,200	AMQ	120.00	+0.000	2,400
AMR	130.00	+0.000	2,600	AMS	140.00	+0.000	2,800	AMT	150.00	+0.000	3,000	AMU	160.00	+0.000	3,200
AMV	170.00	+0.000	3,400	AMW	180.00	+0.000	3,600	AMX	190.00	+0.000	3,800	AMY	200.00	+0.000	4,000
AMZ	210.00	+0.000	4,200	ANA	220.00	+0.000	4,400	ANB	230.00	+0.000	4,600	ANC	240.00	+0.000	4,800
AND	250.00	+0.000	5,000	ANE	260.00	+0.000	5,200	ANF	270.00	+0.000	5,400	ANG	280.00	+0.000	5,600
ANH	290.00	+0.000	5,800	ANI	300.00	+0.000	6,000	ANJ	310.00	+0.000	6,200	ANK	320.00	+0.000	6,400
ANL	330.00	+0.000	6,600	ANM	340.00	+0.000	6,800	ANO	350.00	+0.000	7,000	ANP	360.00	+0.000	7,200
ANQ	370.00	+0.000	7,400	ANR	380.00	+0.000	7,600	ANS	390.00	+0.000	7,800	ANT	400.00	+0.000	8,000
ANU	410.00	+0.000	8,200	ANV	420.00	+0.000	8,400	ANW	430.00	+0.000	8,600	ANX	440.00	+0.000	8,800
ANY	450.00	+0.000	9,000	ANZ	460.00	+0.000	9,200	AOA	470.00	+0.000	9,400	AQB	480.00	+0.000	9,600
AOC	490.00	+0.000	9,800	AOD	500.00	+0.000	10,000	AOE	510.00	+0.000	10,200	AOF	520.00	+0.000	10,400
AOG	530.00	+0.000	10,600	AQH	770.00	+0.000	15,400	AQI	780.00	+0.000	15,600	AQJ	790.00	+0.000	15,800
AQK	800.00	+0.000	16,000	AQZ	810.00	+0.000	16,200	AQA	820.00	+0.000	16,400	AQB	830.00	+0.000	16,600
AQC	840.00	+0.000	16,800	AQD	850.00	+0.000	17,000	AQE	860.00	+0.000	17,200	AQF	870.00	+0.000	17,400
AQG	880.00	+0.000	17,600	AQH	890.00	+0.000	17,800	AQI	900.00	+0.000	18,000	AQJ	910.00	+0.000	18,200
AQK	920.00	+0.000	18,400	AQZ	930.00	+0.000	18,600	AQA	940.00	+0.000	18,800	AQB	950.00	+0.000	19,000
AQC	960.00	+0.000	19,200	AQD	970.00	+0.000	19,400	AQE	980.00	+0.000	19,600	AQF	990.00	+0.000	19,800
AQG	1,000.00	+0.000	20,000	AQH	1,010.00	+0.000	20,200	AQI	1,020.00	+0.000	20,400	AQJ	1,030.00	+0.000	20,600
AQK	1,040.00	+0.000	20,800	AQZ	1,050.00	+0.000	21,000	AQA	1,060.00	+0.000	21,200	AQB	1,070.00	+0.000	21,400
AQC	1,080.00	+0.000	21,600	AQD	1,090.00	+0.000	21,800	AQE	1,100.00	+0.000	22,000	AQF	1,110.00	+0.000	22,200
AQG	1,120.00	+0.000	22,400	AQH	1,130.00	+0.000	22,600	AQI	1,140.00	+0.000	22,800	AQJ	1,150.00	+0.000	23,000
AQK	1,160.00	+0.000	23,200	AQZ	1,170.00	+0.000	23,400	AQA	1,180.00	+0.000	23,600	AQB	1,190.00	+0.000	23,800
AQC	1,200.00	+0.000	24,000	AQD	1,210.00	+0.000	24,200	AQE	1,220.00	+0.000	24,400	AQF	1,230.00	+0.000	24,600
AQG	1,240.00	+0.000	24,800	AQH	1,250.00	+0.000	25,000	AQI	1,260.00	+0.000	25,200	AQJ	1,270.00	+0.000	25,400
AQK	1,280.00	+0.000	25,600	AQZ	1,290.00	+0.000	25,800	AQA	1,300.00	+0.000	26,000	AQB	1,310.00	+0.000	26,200
AQC	1,320.00	+0.000	26,400	AQD	1,330.00	+0.000	26,600	AQE	1,340.00	+0.000	26,800	AQF	1,350.00	+0.000	27,000
AQG	1,360.00	+0.000	27,200	AQH	1,370.00	+0.000	27,400	AQI	1,380.00	+0.000	27,600	AQJ	1,390.00	+0.000	27,800
AQK	1,400.00	+0.000	28,000	AQZ	1,410.00	+0.000	28,200	AQA	1,420.00	+0.000	28,400	AQB	1,430.00	+0.000	28,600
AQC	1,440.00	+0.000	28,800	AQD	1,450.00	+0.000	29,000	AQE	1,460.00	+0.000	29,200	AQF	1,470.00	+0.000	29,400
AQG	1,480.00	+0.000	29,600	AQH	1,490.00	+0.000	29,800	AQI	1,500.00	+0.000	30,000	AQJ	1,510.00	+0.000	30,200
AQK	1,520.00	+0.000	30,400	AQZ	1,530.00	+0.000	30,600	AQA	1,540.00	+0.000	30,800	AQB	1,550.00	+0.000	31,000
AQC	1,560.00	+0.000	31,200	AQD	1,570.00	+0.000	31,400	AQE	1,580.00	+0.000	31,600	AQF	1,590.00	+0.000	31,800
AQG	1,600.00	+0.000	32,000	AQH	1,610.00	+0.000	32,200	AQI	1,620.00	+0.000	32,400	AQJ	1,630.00	+0.000	32,600
AQK	1,640.00	+0.000	32,800	AQZ	1,650.00	+0.000	33,000	AQA	1,660.00	+0.000	33,200	AQB	1,670.00	+0.000	33,400
AQC	1,680.00	+0.000	33,600	AQD	1,690.00	+0.000	33,800	AQE	1,700.00	+0.000	34,000	AQF	1,710.00	+0.000	34,200
AQG	1,720.00	+0.000	34,400	AQH	1,730.00	+0.000	34,600	AQI	1,740.00	+0.000	34,800	AQJ	1,750.00	+0.000	35,000
AQK	1,760.00	+0.000	35,200	AQZ	1,770.00	+0.000	35,400	AQA	1,780.00	+0.000	35,600	AQB	1,790.00	+0.000	35,800
AQC	1,800.00	+0.000	36,000	AQD	1,810.00	+0.000	36,200	AQE	1,820.00	+0.000	36,400	AQF	1,830.00	+0.000	36,600
AQG	1,840.00	+0.000	36,800	AQH	1,850.00	+0.000	37,000	AQI	1,860.00	+0.000	37,200	AQJ	1,870.00	+0.000	37,400
AQK	1,880.00	+0.000	37,600	AQZ	1,890.00	+0.000	37,800	AQA	1,900.00	+0.000	38,000	AQB	1,910.00	+0.000	38,200
AQC	1,920.00	+0.000	38,400	AQD	1,930.00	+0.000	38,600	AQE	1,940.00	+0.000	38,800	AQF	1,950.00	+0.000	39,000
AQG	1,960.00	+0.000	39,200	AQH	1,970.00	+0.000	39,400	AQI	1,980.00	+0.000	39,600	AQJ	1,990.00	+0.000	39,800
AQK	2,000.00	+0.000	40,000	AQZ	2,010.00	+0.000	40,200	AQA	2,020.00	+0.000	40,400	AQB	2,030.00	+0.000	40,600
AQC	2,040.00	+0.000	40,800	AQD	2,050.00	+0.000	41,000	AQE	2,060.00	+0.000	41,200	AQF	2,070.00	+0.000	41,400
AQG	2,080.00	+0.000	41,600	AQH	2,090.00	+0.000	41,800	AQI	2,100.00	+0.000	42,000	AQJ	2,110.00	+0.000	42,200
AQK	2,120.00	+0.000	42,400	AQZ	2,130.00	+0.000	42,600	AQA	2,140.00	+0.000	42,800	AQB	2,150.00	+0.000	43,000
AQC	2,160.00	+0.000	43,200	AQD	2,170.00	+0.000	43,400	AQE	2,180.00	+0.000	43,600	AQF	2,190.00	+0.000	43,800
AQG	2,200.00	+0.000	44,000	AQH	2,210.00	+0.000	44,200	AQI	2,220.00	+0.000	44,400	AQJ	2,230.00	+0.000	44,600
AQK	2,240.00	+0.000	44,800	AQZ	2,250.00	+0.000	45,000	AQA	2,260.00	+0.000	45,200	AQB	2,270.00	+0.000	45,400
AQC	2,280.00	+0.000	45,600	AQD	2,290.00	+0.000	45,800	AQE	2,300.00	+0.000	46,000	AQF	2,310.00	+0.000	46,200
AQG	2,320.00	+0.000	46,400	AQH	2,330.00	+0.000	46,600	AQI	2,340.00	+0.000	46,800	AQJ	2,350.00	+0.000	47,000
AQK	2,360.00	+0.000	47,200	AQZ	2,370.00	+0.000	47,400	AQA	2,380.00	+0.000	47,600	AQB	2,390.00	+0.000	47,800
AQC	2,400.00	+0.000	48,000	AQD	2,410.00	+0.000	48,200	AQE	2,420.00	+0.000	48,400	AQF	2,430.00	+0.000	48,600
AQG	2,440.00	+0.000	48,800	AQH	2,450.00	+0.000	49,000	AQI	2,460.00	+0.000	49,200	AQJ	2,470.00	+0.000	49,400
AQK	2,480.00	+0.000	49,600	AQZ	2,490.00	+0.000	49,800	AQA	2,500.00	+0.000	50,000	AQB	2,510.00	+0.000	50,200
AQC	2,520.00	+0.000	50,400	AQD	2,530.00	+0.000	50,600	AQE	2,540.00	+0.000	50,800	AQF	2,550.00	+0.000	51,000
AQG	2,560.00	+0.000	51,200	AQH	2,570.00	+0.000	51,400	AQI	2,580.00	+0.000	51,600	AQJ	2,590.00	+0.000	51,800
AQK	2,600.00	+0.000	52,000	AQZ	2,610.00	+0.000	52,200	AQA	2,620.00	+0.000	52,400	AQB	2,630.00	+0.000	52,600
AQC	2,640.00	+0.000	52,800	AQD	2,650.00	+0.000	53,000	AQE	2,660.00	+0.000	53,200	AQF	2,670.00	+0.000	53,400
AQG	2,680.00	+0.000	53,600	AQH	2,690.00	+0.000	53,800	AQI	2,700.00	+0.000	54,000	AQJ	2,710.00	+0.000	54,200
AQK	2,720.00	+0.000	54,400	AQZ	2,730.00	+0.000	54,600	AQA	2,740.00	+0.000	54,800	AQB	2,750.00	+0.000	55,000
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AQG	2,800.00	+0.000	56,000	AQH	2,810.00	+0.000	56,200	AQI	2,820.00	+0.000	56,400	AQJ	2,830.00	+0.000	56,600
AQK	2,840.00	+0.000	56,800	AQZ	2,850.00	+0.000	57,000	AQA	2,860.00	+0.000	57,200	AQB	2,870.00	+0.000	57,400
AQC	2,880.00	+0.000	57,600	AQD	2,890.00	+0.000	57,800	AQE	2,900.00	+0.000	58,000	AQF	2,910.00	+0.000	58,200
AQG	2,920.00	+0.000	58,400	AQH	2,930.00	+0.000	58,600	AQI	2,940.00	+0.000	58,800	AQJ	2,950.00	+0.000	59,000
AQK	2,960.00	+0.000	59,200	AQZ	2,970.00	+0.000	59,400	AQA	2,980.00	+0.000	59,600	AQB	2,990.00	+0.000	59,800
AQC	3,000.00	+0.000	60,000	AQD	3,010.00	+0.000	60,200	AQE	3,020.00	+0.000	60,400	AQF	3,030.00	+0.000	60,600
AQG	3,040.00	+0.000	60,800	AQH	3,050.00	+0.000	61,000	AQI	3,060.00	+0.000	61,200	AQJ	3,070.00	+0.000	61,400
AQK	3,080.00	+0.000	61,600	AQZ	3,090.00	+0.000	61,800	AQA	3,100.00	+0.000	62,000	AQB	3,110.00	+0.000	62,200
AQC	3,120.00	+0.000	62,400	AQD	3,130.00	+0.000	62,600	AQE	3,140.00	+0.000	62,800	AQF	3,150.00	+0.000	63,000
AQG	3,160.00	+0.000	63,200	AQH	3,170.										



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## Unique positions in training administration

### Watford

KPMG is one of the world's leading international business advisory organisations. Our Central Training Unit in Watford is a centre of excellence for professional development and we have opportunities for experienced administrators in three key temporary positions.

**Training Course Administrator 6 months fixed term contract c.£16,000 pro rata**  
Available from early December, this is a pivotal role in which you will ensure the smooth running of courses and conferences held both at Watford and other UK locations.

Dealing with the preparation and distribution of course materials, you will also be responsible for liaising with venue co-ordinators and the booking of accommodation. Processing invoices and monitoring expenditure will also be important aspects of the role.

A highly numerate and computer literate individual, you will be educated to 'A' level or equivalent and have experience of Word, Excel and other PC packages. Your outstanding organisational ability and communication skills should be matched by the ability to work on your own initiative and cope with pressure. As regular travel and overnight stays will be necessary, a flexible approach to working hours will be essential.

**Department Administrator 6 months fixed term contract c.£14,500 pro rata**

Required from early 1998, this varied role involves a broad spectrum of tasks - from co-ordinating the booking of training rooms to liaising with training providers. Updating the training database and preparing reports will also be part of this role.

You will be educated to at least 'O' level/GCSE standard with good secretarial, computer and administration experience and an outgoing personality.

**Health & Safety Course Administrator 1 year fixed term contract c.£15,500 pro rata**

Required to start January 1998, you will be involved in administering a Health & Safety course programme as well as helping plan and co-ordinate other courses, confirming bookings, attending schedules and the maintenance of the training database. The role will also involve constant liaison throughout the firm.

A teamworker with a keen eye for detail, you will be educated to 'O' Level or GCSE standard. A high level of computer literacy and a professional telephone manner will be essential, and the ability to remain calm under pressure.

To apply, please write with your CV, to: Susan Morris, Human Resources, KPMG, 58 Clarendon Road, Watford, WD1 1DA.

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means business

## MCM

Europe Limited - a division of MCM Inc

MCM supplies screen-based financial analysis to virtually all major Foreign Exchange and Fixed Income dealing operations worldwide. In many segments MCM services are acknowledged as being market leaders. As part of a major expansion programme we are seeking two client liaison staff to work with our senior management and marketing team. Duties will include visiting clients, demonstrating services, taking part in promotional campaigns and dealing with various functional levels in major banks. The two positions are:

### ACCOUNT DEVELOPMENT

This role will principally involve working with the major international banks who constitute our client base in London. The principal qualities required include a high degree of team spirit, good communication skills and the confidence required to deal with senior financial markets participants. Salary is negotiable based on experience, but is expected to be in the £20-25,000 per annum range with a bonus potential of circa £5-10,000 per annum.

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

This role is similar to that of account development, the main difference being that the bulk of the client base will be in Continental Europe. Additional skills will include languages, mainly German, with a high degree of fluency. Foreign travel will clearly be required, on some occasions for extended periods. Salary is negotiable based on experience, but is expected to be in the £22-27,000 per annum range with a bonus potential of circa £5-12,000 per annum.

Candidates should be educated to degree level or should be able to demonstrate relevant experience.

After successful completion of a probationary period all employees enjoy a range of benefits, including pension funding and health care.

Candidates should forward their CV, stating which position is of interest, to:

The Recruitment Officer, MCM (Europe) Ltd  
The Mill House, 8 Mill Street  
London, SE1 2BA

TEL: 0171 378 7273 FAX: 0171 357 7959



**BEDGEBURY  
SCHOOL**

Independent Boarding  
& Day for Girls 2½ - 18  
Goudhurst, Kent TN17 2SH

This prestigious school seeks to appoint a:

## Bursar

Bedgebury School is housed in a magnificent mansion set in 250 acres of parkland and also in two other major properties. The School is awaiting planning permission for an exciting building programme to allow it to operate from one site.

The person appointed will be responsible to the Headmistress for the provision of central support services and should have experience in two or more of the following fields of management:

Finance, Estates/Premises, Human Resources, Education  
Catering/Hospitality, Legal Services, Information Technology

A competitive salary will be negotiated

The closing date for applications is 5 December 1997.  
Forms and an information pack may be obtained from:  
The Headmistress

Telephone 01580 211630

## OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY 6th Nov - 8.30am to 7.00pm

- Career Choice: Great for juniors (£10/15K), exciting breaks for team secretaries (£16/18K) & perfect challenges for PAs (£20K+).
- Colourful Companies: Interesting, challenging and fun. Finance, management consultancy, media, PR & publishing, City & West End.
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- Chied-up Consultants: to look after YOU ALL DAY. Bring your CV and enjoy a career chat, positive advice and refreshments. Drop by or call Donna for an alternative appt time.

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Wormford Court, 29 Throgmorton Street, London EC2

### EXPERIENCED AUDIO SECRETARY/PA

Exciting opportunity to join young, fast growing, successful West End Commercial Estate Agents. Specialising in Retail & Restaurant Properties. Applicant must have computer skills including network and email experience.

Salary commensurate with experience.  
Apply to: Philip Swadlow  
Sheila Swadlow & Company  
Tel: 0171 580 3366 Fax: 0171 580 3399

### SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT

To support busy party operating team in Fulham. We have been established for 18 years and are considered leaders in the field. You must be well-organised, able to work under pressure, have your own round Windows 95 and be able to type 40 wpm. Good salary for right person. Please telephone Gwyneth Williams on 0171 580 0808 or fax 0171 580 1825.

## P.A. TO DIRECTOR

London/Reading Competitive Salary  
We are the UK arm of one of the largest American computer companies. We are now looking for a highly professional PA to work solely with one of our directors responsible for a rapidly expanding telecommunications group of over 100 people.

This is no small task and you will need to be able to deal sensitively and effectively with senior level management working across a number of departments. Self motivated, you must also be able to use your own initiative, drawing upon your excellent communication and organisational skills to support your director to greatest effect.

Along with a least 10 years' experience in a similar role, you must possess a thorough knowledge of Microsoft Office, Word, Excel, PowerPoint and e-mail. A willingness to travel to Reading approximately twice a week is also vital. In return for your commitment you will receive a highly competitive salary and benefits package, including London weighting.

If you're interested in hearing more, write enclosing CV to: Maggie Hill, Digital Equipment Company Limited, Wotton Group, Imperial Way, Reading, RG2 0UE.

### PA/Secretary North London

The Managing Director of an International Service Marketing Practice requires a mature, experienced PA. You must be proficient in MS Office applications and have an excellent telephone manner. An ability to keep a busy diary and manage travel arrangements reliably is essential.

Salary £18,500 + Bonus (neg. neg.)

CVs to:

J Young,  
Blakes Marketing Practice,  
Turnberry House,  
London N20 9BH.

### SECRETARY/ADMINISTRATOR

circa £17,500 pa  
This busy City yacht club requires a mature secretary/administrator experienced in MS Office to join a small concentrated team administering the varied activities of a thriving membership club. Travel loan and private health care after qualifying service.

Send applications only with CV to:

Clare Executive  
Law City Ltd  
801 West Lane  
Upper Thames Street  
LONDON EC4A 3DF

### PA/ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT

Required immediately assisting Managing Director. Ability to work on own initiative and assist in other administrative duties. Computer literate and at least 1 year accounting experience.

Hours 8.30-5pm.

Please send CV and salary history to:  
Mark Street, Managing Director,  
Financial Services Ltd, 3rd Floor,  
Buckingham House, 22-23 Queen Street, London EC4A 1AD.

## PA/OFFICE MANAGER

Salary c. £22,000, plus benefits  
Knightsbridge office

SFP is one of the largest pension and life insurance companies in the Nordic region. Its assets are managed by SFP Investment Management, principally from Stockholm, as well as from offices in London and New York.

The London office is now looking for an experienced PA/Office Manager to join a new portfolio management team which is being assembled in London. This will focus on international real estate investment throughout Europe and Asia.

This is an ideal position for a highly organised individual with first class skills in Microsoft (or similar) packages. Both flexible and capable of working on your own initiative, you will be responsible for ensuring that the office runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Your principal duties will include secretarial, personnel and administration support for a 6 strong team, who frequently travel abroad.

If you wish to apply for this position, please send a copy of your CV to:

Christine Coleman  
Personnel Officer  
SFP Investment Management  
243 Knightsbridge, London, SW7 1DN.



**james martin + co**

PA required  
£20 - £25K + benefits  
Age 25+

Are you looking for a challenge?

PA required to work for an international consultancy company based in Chertsey. Ideally candidates should have excellent communication skills to enable them to organise events, co-ordinate travel, diaries and provide secretarial support to three Directors.

The role requires a minimum of two years experience working at senior level. Expertise in Word, Excel and PowerPoint is required and a sense of humour is vital!

If you feel you fulfil the above criteria, please send your CV and a covering letter to Alison Whittenbury (Private & Confidential) at:

James Martin + Co  
11 Windsor Street  
Chertsey  
Surrey  
KT16 8AY

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The Engineering Council requires an Assistant Secretary for our busy Director General's office, to work with the Director General's Personal Secretary. The applicant will need fast accurate word processing skills, preferably Word for Windows including Powerpoint and Excel, and good administrative skills. Shorthand would be an advantage.

Salary is c. £16,000 p.a. + generous benefits.

Please send your curriculum vitae and covering letter to:

Joanne Perkins, Personnel Administrator  
Engineering Council, 10 Malvern Street,  
London, WC2R 3ER. Closing Date:  
No Agencies  
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The Engineering Council sets the standards for the education and training of Engineers.  
Charity No. 286142

## EXPERIENCED SECRETARY

c.£16,000  
Enthusiastic Secretary required for a team of four chartered surveyors. The successful candidate will have excellent interpersonal skills and be proficient in the use of Wordperfect 6.1 and Audio typing. Fast speeds are essential. An ability to work on your own initiative is an additional requirement. Previous property experience would be advantageous.

Please apply in writing enclosing a CV to:  
Moffatt & Partners, 1 Angel Court, St James's,  
SW1Y 6GF.

## RECEPTIONIST/ADMIN SEC

Expanding law service co. require well presented receptionist who can combine the role with administrative support to two General Managers. A flexible, enthusiastic, team player with a knowledge of Word for Windows, Excel, PowerPoint.

Sal £14,000 + bonus p.a.  
Post CV to: Office Manager, CPS, 81  
Piccadilly  
London W1V 0HF.

Imperial Cancer Research Fund is one of Britain's largest charities. Our aim is to prevent, treat or cure all forms of cancer.

## SCIENTIFIC LIAISON ADMINISTRATOR

£15,000 - £18,000 + pension

BASED IN LONDON, WC2

We seek a mature and analytical individual to provide general administrative and office support within the Scientific Liaison area, which handles communication between the Fundraising and Scientific branches of our organisation. You will act as a key point of contact, assisting in updating and monitoring project data, and maintaining a spreadsheet of scientific equipment. We want our donors to have a better understanding of the scientific work we do. Therefore, as part of our project to improve contact between the people who donate and the scientists who work to eradicate cancer, you will assist in arranging lab visits and other initiatives. With an interest in science (preferably backed up by A-levels) and at least three years' secretarial experience, you should be numerate with excellent interpersonal skills.

To apply, please send a covering letter and two copies of your CV with the names and addresses of 2 referees to the Personnel Department, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, P.O. Box 123, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3PX. Please quote reference: 16987T. Closing date for applications: 19 November 1997.

WE HAVE A NO SMOKING POLICY



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## EXECUTIVE SEARCH

As a newly formed Executive Search consultancy, based in beautifully refurbished offices in Mayfair, we are looking for flexible, enthusiastic people with a professional approach who genuinely want to contribute towards and share in the success of a new company.

### PERSONAL ASSISTANT

A varied and challenging role working with two Directors, you must be educated to a minimum of A' Level, have proven secretarial and computer skills at director level and be a good communicator as there is a significant amount of client/candidate liaison at the highest level. Versatility, a hands-on approach with a strong sense of humour are essential.

Salary: £20,000 + bonus.

### RECEPTIONIST/SECRETARIAL SUPPORT

As the front person of the company it is vital that this important position is held by a well presented, cheerful, energetic experienced receptionist who is organised and has an excellent telephone manner. Coupled with your reception duties you will be assisting with typing and office management duties and will need to be able to prioritise your work.

Salary: £18,000 + bonus

Please fax your CV to Lulu Swainston  
0171 628 8833 or e-mail: Lulu@btinternet.com  
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## HOUSE OF COMMONS

up to £16K + 27 days holidays + Pension and other benefits

An opportunity to work in one of the most exciting and diverse catering organisations in the country. Applications are invited from confident, self-motivated people with good communication skills to join a team of highly qualified chefs. The key role for the person appointed will help co-ordinate the admin. as well as day to day office activity associated with the operation of eight kitchens. It will require hard work but will be rewarding and interesting too!

To apply, send your CV to the Personnel Office, Refinement Department, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA no later than Monday 17 November 1997.

Applications from disabled people are welcomed.

The House of Commons is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

## Directors' P.A. Hackney E8



**MOMART**

MOMART, the UK's premier Fine Art handlers, are looking for an experienced PA to support the Board of Directors working predominantly for the Managing Director.

The role requires excellent organisational skills, computer literacy, good typing speeds and the ability to work under pressure.

Please send your C.V. to Carole Hastings, MOMART, 199-205 Richmond Road E8 3NJ.

## PERSONAL SECRETARY

To Director and General Manager

# Where the buck stops.

UP TO £21,000 • LONDON EC1

Royal Mail is one of the UK's most consistently successful businesses. As a forward thinking organisation we have an on-going and obvious commitment to quality and service. We maintain these standards by ensuring that we're represented at every level within the organisation by individuals who are the very best in their field.

At Personal Secretary level already, you'll realise that you'll be working for an extremely busy individual who needs to rely on you to manage a pressurised workload; yours will frequently be the desk where the buck stops. We'll expect you to bring the

very best office management and secretarial skills, both audio and copy, including Lotus Notes, Organiser and Microsoft. This is a highly responsible role, suited to a highly organised person with excellent communication skills. You'll need to be comfortable as both team player and team leader, discreet when dealing with confidential information and confident when managing budgets.

In return for your professionalism, we offer a competitive salary and a challenging and supported career within Royal Mail or the wider Post Office group. To apply, please forward your CV, quoting

Ref: 05/CC to our advising consultant, Alex Wilson at Wilson Associates, 45 Frederick Street, EDINBURGH EH2 1ER. Closing date: 19th November 1997.

Royal Mail is an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Suitably qualified applicants with a disability will be shortlisted for interview.



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## ROOM AT THE TOP

International Gourmet £25,000

This prestigious, high profile restaurant group is looking for a senior PA to work with the newly appointed Managing Director. Based in their Head Office you will be at the forefront of this fast paced, dynamic business. Your role will incorporate direct involvement in a variety of projects, management of a hectic diary, producing PowerPoint presentations as well as full PA support. You will be assisting at all levels within the group so excellent interpersonal skills are a must. The successful applicant will be confident and have a proactive attitude. Shorthand and MSOffice essential.

Committed to equal opportunities.  
0171 287 7788

**PA to MD in PR**  
**£20,000 + 2 bonuses**

Established PR Co with clients in fashion and interiors need a PA to oversee the MD's work. Life/interiors office parties as well as take responsibility for the smooth running of the day-to-day operation. Confident skills, sh. useful, 60wpm on W4w and min 5 years experience in a demanding job.

Call 0171 287 2444/Ext 287 3717.

**MIDDLETON JEFFERS**  
RECRUITMENT LIMITED

**PA TO POWERHOUSE**  
**£24,000 + 4**

High-powered Chief Executive, Head of Nursing Home Group will appreciate your 50wpm/40wpm - MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint skills but more importantly your organisational ability, your command of English and your ability to charm the birds out of the trees! With all of these qualities you will be well able to keep up with this female dynamo of a boss.

Call 0171 287 2444/Ext 287 3717.

**MIDDLETON JEFFERS**  
RECRUITMENT LIMITED

**PA trading floor.**

to £24,000 + Benefits Canary Wharf

The pace is fast and furious in this varied role supporting two executives. You must be proactive and well organised to manage the diaries, co-ordinate meetings and client functions plus hold the fort while your bosses travel. Experience in investment banking and knowledge of Word for Windows is essential. Location: Canary Wharf. Hours: 8am-6pm. Age 24-35. Please call Vanessa Mitchell on 0171 390 7000.

[www.cronecorkill.co.uk](http://www.cronecorkill.co.uk)

**Mini office manager.**

c.£25,000 City

Young, dynamic financial PR company based in the City require an organised self-starter as their office manager. You will be involved in all aspects of accounts including client billing and payroll, as well as travel arrangements and managing facilities. Skills required: 40wpm and excellent IT literacy. Hours/Days: flexible. Please call Tracey Wakely on 0171 390 7000.

**Crone Corkill**  
Pure Recruitment Skills

**Superior support.**

Up to £30,000 City

This historic and prolific financial institution requires a first class PA to assist their Chief Executive. A combination of superb secretarial, interpersonal and social skills will ensure your success. Senior director level experience at a 'blue chip' company is essential. Skills: 100 wpm shorthand, 50 wpm typing and W4W. Education: A Levels. Age: up to 40. Please call Sarah Burt on 0171 390 7000.

**PA IN CHELSEA**  
**£20,000**

Walk to work at Estate Agents close to Sloane Sq! Well if its too far, you can still be the boss's PA and run the office and him, and help ensure that your boss is motivated and happy! 70% admin/other tasks and 30% Audio, there, that's not so bad is it?

Call 0171-287 2444/Ext 287 3717.

**MIDDLETON JEFFERS**  
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**PA to CEO**  
**to £26,000 + benefits W1**

PA with min 50wpm who lives Centrally will be appreciated by Chief Exec of global group 1 min from Oxford Circus. Self and 5th Secretary who is ready to move into that bigger role. You will be offered responsibility and stimulation to grow and yet still be appreciated for your secretarial skills of humour and professional approach.

Call 0171 228 3444/Ext 287 3717.

**MIDDLETON JEFFERS**  
RECRUITMENT LIMITED

**THE HATTON GARDEN AGENCY**

**TRUST PARTNER'S P.A.**  
**£22-24,000**

A professional PA/Secretary is sought to support the Partner in a 1 to 1 role. Experience of liaison with high profile clients. Ability to develop relationships with long standing clients. Many charities and families have been associated with the firm for several generations. Secretarial work via Word/Powerpoint/Excel etc. Ideally would suit a mature Secretary/PA with previous current experience at senior level.

0171 242 2344  
Ex. 11 years

**PA/Secretary**

We are a West End literary company looking for a PA/Secretary with a dynamic personality to work at Director level. Shorthand/Typing skills of 100wpm, knowledge of Word for Windows and previous experience at director level is a plus. Experience in administrative work would be an advantage.

We offer a salary in the range of £20,000 - £24,000 p.a., annual bonus and pension (contributory). If you are the ideal candidate and looking for an interesting and varied role, then please send your CV to: Vicky Hamilton, The Hatton Garden Agency, 49 Marylebone High St, London W1M 4ED

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**£25,000 + Benefits**

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WEST END OFFICE: 0171 494 4466 / 0171 494 4489  
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**PA to Director AND Vice President**

**£21,000**

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**EXECUTIVE PA**

**£22-24,000**

A leading city Search and Selection firm with an international network is seeking an efficient, professional yet approachable PA to work for their high flying founder MD. Duties include: executive travel and diary arrangements, setting up meetings and agendas as well as administering the personal function. You will need excellent secretarial and organisational skills, a meticulous eye for detail and the ability to liaise at high levels as well as extensive experience of working in a highly pressured and professional environment. Background knowledge of the financial sector would be an advantage. Please call Angela Mortimer.

Committed to equal opportunities  
**0171 814 0800**  
Angela Mortimer

**SUMMERS**

**SPECIALIST RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS**

**CITY PA**  
**£28,000 + EXCELLENT BENEFITS**

Managing Director of International commodity brokers seeks proactive PA. You will need to be a brilliant organiser, have a personal work. Never a dull moment! Tough yet charming, you will have a mature attitude and a lively personality. 70wpm typing, shorthand/longhand essential. W4W, Basic Excel.

Please call 0171 637 5312

**SHORTHAND - £££££**

How would you like to work for one of the City's leading Banks? Differentiated because everyone wants previous experience? Well look no further! If you have good shorthand skills (60wpm shorthand, 40wpm typing and Word for Windows) and a professional, outgoing manner, we want to talk to you about two secretarial vacancies supporting small executive teams. Call now for an immediate interview! If you are aged 25-30, have a mature attitude towards overtime and offer a busy social life.

**BIG FISH IN A SMALL POND**  
**TO £20,000**

Try, prestigious company based at Hyde Park Corner seeks a PA to work for one of their MDs. He's demanding and travels extensively so you need resilience and lots of personality. Ideally you'll be aged mid 20s with a steady background. Windows and Excel are essential and shorthand an advantage. Call today for an immediate interview!

**TROT INTO TOURISM!**  
**£18K + BONUS + GYM!**

Get up and go! City tourism? Well this company based in Hammersmith wants to hear from you! The role involves supporting a small team providing secretarial and administrative support with 20wpm and good MS Office skills. In return they offer great benefits including an in-house gym and swimming pool DON'T DELAY, CALL TODAY!

**WE KNOW HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOU!**

Forget all those extravagant promises you read in the papers. What you are really interested in is consistent work, good temp rates, prestigious companies, interesting assignments and Temp Controllers who are straight with you. We don't have gimmicks, we offer real benefits which turn into a healthy pay packet every week.

**THIS IS WHAT WE OFFER YOU:**

- A basic fee service
- Work 52 weeks per year
- Good rates of pay
- Holiday bonus
- A friendly, helpful accounts department

If you are aged 18-40, have good MS Office for advanced WordPerfect 6.1) excellent audio and if possible, shorthand skills - do yourself a favour, CALL THE BEST IN TOWN!

**TEL: 0171 734 8484**  
**FAX: 0171 734 8301**

**AIMING TO EMPLOY THE BEST?**

We are a highly successful, long established, family owned National Building Contractor who are looking to recruit a high performer for the following vacancy at our St. Albans office.

**PA to Managing Director/ Office Manager.**

If you possess a minimum of 3 years experience of a similar PA level/Office Manager, you are a good team player, energetic, professional and reliable. Able to liaise with a good sense of humour in return, we will offer you an attractive salary/benefits, and a great opportunity you would not want to miss.

To apply, please send your CV, stating your current or most recent salary, to:

Peter Norman  
John Sisk & Son Ltd  
Park House  
Frymore  
St Albans  
Herts AL2 2NH  
Ref: m11

**Hays Banking Personnel**

**SECRETARIAL DIVISION**

**CHRISTMAS BONUS!**

Christmas is coming and your wallet's getting fat... No? Then it's time to make the change and get into Banking! We are currently recruiting for challenging & exciting Secretarial Temporary and Permanent opportunities in the World's most prestigious financial institutions.

To see how you could improve your prospects (and bank balance) come and see us at our

**SECRETARIAL OPEN DAY**  
*Real jobs for real people!*

Thursday 6 November 1997  
Consultants available from 8:00 am until 7:00 pm

You must have: Word, Excel & Powerpoint Minimum 50 wpm audio/copy typing, at least 5 GCSE passes grade C and above and/or A-Level standard education, proven Secretarial skills and experience, flexibility and bags of enthusiasm!

Phone for an appointment if you are unable to make it on the day.

41/42 London Wall, London EC2M 5TB.  
Tel: 0171 638 7005. Fax: 0171 628 5057

**Work with:**  
Chartered Surveyors,  
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Surveyors, Architects,  
Construction and  
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**Eclipse**

**COUNTRY ESTATES**

Secretary is required for this "Blue Chip" company that specialises in the countryside dealing with land and country estates. You will be required to provide full secretarial and administrative support to the Equity Partner. Ideal candidate will have an interest in the countryside. Starting salary £18,000 + PRP + two bonus + JSTL + discount BUPA + Pension +2116 days hols etc.

**RECRUITMENT PA**

A unique opportunity to join one of the most prestigious companies in the property industry for a bright, intelligent, ambitious PA to assist the Personal Manager. The employee of this position is an recruitment, therefore, previous experience within this industry would be advantageous. Excellent prospects for the right candidate. Salary c £20,000.

The Eclipse Organisation Ltd,  
13 Maddox Street, London W1R 9LE  
Tel: 0171 629 4060 Fax 0171 629 5493 (Rec Cons)

**PAN EUROPEAN RECRUITMENT**

**GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY IN P.R**

**PA in Knightsbridge c. £20,000**

We are a small, specialist press and public relations firm, currently the leading agency in its field. The two partners need a dynamic, self-motivated and confident PA, who wants to get really involved and can use their initiative. In addition to providing secretarial back-up, you will be dealing directly with the press and our clients, helping to create new stories, organising parties and events and running the office in our absence.

You must be smart, well educated, outgoing and a natural 'people' person with a sense of humour and excellent writing skills. Minimum age 25.

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Unless you want to invest in an expensive colour laser or use a colour inkjet — cheaper but much slower — you need an alternative.

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Choose "View/Black and White" to turn the whole slide show into black and white. Then, if you find some of the black and white slides are, say, too dark to print well, right click on the offending item and choose one of the options — light grayscale is a good first choice.

Any changes you make in this way will not affect your colour, onscreen slides.

CHRIS WARD

## Start at the top — and work up

Ada Parr is just too good to be true — and it seems this is all down to hard work, intelligence and skill.

Judged Yellow Pages PA of the year, she has not only landed top secretarial jobs throughout her career, but when she was unable to recruit good secretaries for a company she worked for she took a two-year City and Guilds course to become a lecturer in the secretarial skills she was looking for.

Miss Parr, 41, says she entered for PA of the year with no thought of even getting on the shortlist, let alone winning. She had been edged on by her boss, Peter Hehr, chairman of the public relations consultancy Countrywide Porter Novelli, who calls her a "world-class" personal assistant. His official reward for supporting her is a luxury weekend break for two.

She has certainly revolutionised the secretarial role in the company. "The word secretary is not used here," Ms Parr says. "Those who work on a one-to-one basis with their boss are called PAs and those working as part of a client handling team are communication assistants."

Ada Parr built on her first-class office skills to become PA of the year, says Susan MacDonald

"Before I joined there was a regular secretarial lunch, but I thought this was not good enough," she says. So in order to promote and support their work she set up a PA network called Pals (personal assistants' learning support) which covers Countrywide Porter Novelli's six offices, including one in Brussels.

"We share best practice on a daily basis and I have written a training manual for all support staff, setting out what is expected and detailing the different areas of expertise, such as telephone technique and client handling. We all learn about these areas, even if they are not part of our daily work," she says.

Ms Parr was born in St Andrews and after leaving school with the Scottish equi-

valent of eight O levels and four A levels, gained a qualification in secretarial studies with German, German shorthand, and French.

You could say she started at the top and worked her way up. Certainly her CV makes it clear that she deserves her award. Her first job, as PA to the managing director of a German hydraulics manufacturer, lasted six years — including a year in Germany — before she was head hunted to be PA to the managing director and technical translator for another German company.

"I spoke German and used German shorthand everyday in those two jobs," she says. Then came a two-year job as a chairman's assistant and another two-year job as a managing director's PA. Before she decided to use the further education qualifications she had gained.

"I had contacted City and Guilds in the Seventies because I found it impossible to find people with good secretarial skills — especially shorthand," she says.

"Their answer was to tell me to come and qualify as a teacher of the skills I was looking for. So I went on a training course twice a week



Ada Parr, rated world-class by her boss: being appreciated makes a big difference to a PA's attitude to work, she says

for two years." In 1989 she became a college lecturer for three years, teaching German, French, clerical procedure, secretarial studies and office administration.

She went on to be an office manager for three years before joining her present company last year. Now, she says, she is trying to ensure that she keeps her French up to scratch by using it consistently in her dealings with the Brussels

office. Alongside this concentrated career she found time to marry and has a daughter, now aged 23.

Along with her title goes a list of speaking engagements, including an appearance at next year's Crème de la Crème exhibition in London, and prizes such as a Caribbean holiday for two and a training course at The Industrial Society. She has decided to donate her Industrial Society course

to her company's Pals network "so that we can all benefit from it".

Ms Parr says that American colleagues have been surprised by her award, saying that there is no equivalent in America. So she is working with them to try to form a group in America to promote such an award.

Her advice to budding PAs is to get their basic skills up to such a high standard that they

never have to worry about them, and can feel free to get on with developing their confidence and career.

"You need to be willing to work hard and long hours, but you can get a terrific buzz from being part of things, and if you are appreciated it makes a big difference to your whole attitude to work."

"And don't forget," she says, "you work with a boss, not for a boss."

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# A pas de trois at Covent Garden?

Chris Smith has ignited the biggest arts row for years. The Culture Secretary's proposal, floated out of the blue on Monday, is that English National Opera abandons the Coliseum and shares Covent Garden with the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet when that theatre reopens after its redevelopment. All three companies are in grave financial difficulties. But is such a radical plan desirable, or even feasible? Rodney Milnes and Debra Craine, *The Times's* opera and dance critics, assess the implications, while Richard Morrison outlines the political risks

There are several mind-boggling aspects to Monday's announcement by Chris Smith. It is more than just ironic, it is blackly tragic that the spokesman for a political party retaining the word "Labour" in its name, the party of Jennie Lee under whose guidance the provision of arts and education for the people of the UK reached new heights, should be proposing the reduction of artistic activity in the nation's capital. Smith cites as excuse a crisis, a crisis caused by ten years and more of Arts Council *laissez faire* inactivity in the face of Treasury intransigence which the present Government is too wet to challenge.

Smith says the nation can no longer afford two opera houses, which is hogwash: the nation could if the Government had any political will, or any vision beyond acquiring power and maintaining it by fawning on the tabloid media and blandly surrendering to the cultural values they promote. Paris has four opera houses, Berlin three, Munich two. Under new Labour's inspired leadership, is London to be reduced to the status of Oslo?

Make no mistake, what this is about is the disbandment of English National Opera. The very idea that the company and the values it upholds would survive when sharing a theatre — and an established audience — wholly unsuited to its activities is, again, laughable. If London cannot afford two opera companies, then the one to go is the Royal, recently taken over by a carpetbagger management from the source of all its ills (the Arts Council), playing to a tiny elite audience (80,000 tops) at prices that exclude all save the rich and the committed fans, and of no social relevance whatever.

The age-old, socially OK buzz-word "touring" is raised, but it is far cheaper to bring audiences to opera via the proper provision of matinees than it is to take opera on

tour. I am amazed that someone of Sir Richard Eyre's experience has agreed to become associated with all this nonsense and can only hope that after due consideration he throws it back at Smith, or at whichever civil servant dreamt it up.

There is no mention of one significant word in the press release — language. ENO has always performed in the language of the audience, something that composers have taken for granted since opera was "invented" 400 years ago. And there is also little mention of management: would ENO's values be safe in the hands of any of the current Covent Garden bosses?

There has been too much gleeful anticipation of redundancies, of throwing in the bin hundreds of highly skilled craftsmen who over the past 50 years have led to London being recognised as one of the leading operatic centres in the world — and they started from virtually nothing. But that is the philistine UK all over: see something we do well, and destroy it.

Chris Smith has been quoted as describing himself as "a realist". I can think of a number of other names, of which "pragmatist" is one of the more polite. He is certainly a procrastinator: shove the decision-making on to someone else and wait for six months.

Admittedly he has a problem. The sensible provision of opera in the capital would involve one 2,000-seat house for international opera and another of 1,200 for ENO. If he can only "afford" one, then the latter is the only option. But he is stuck with the irreversible lottery grant to the ROH, and has to put something in it. Except that he could turn it into a dance hall, a feat previously achieved by one Adolf Hitler.

RODNEY MILNES

As usual when the Royal Opera House is the subject of heated debate, the ballet barely gets a mention. In all the news coverage that followed Chris Smith's announcement, hardly a thought was spared for the poor old Royal Ballet, Britain's premier dance company and resident at Covent Garden for half a century (longer, in fact, than the Royal Opera itself). Chris Smith's letter to Sir Richard Eyre, setting out the terms of the review, doesn't seem to take into account the effect of his proposals on the Royal Ballet. The Culture Secretary, like just about everyone else, clearly sees this as an opera problem.

At first glance his plan, should it go ahead, is bad news for the Royal Ballet. Already struggling to achieve parity with the Royal Opera

within the Opera House organisation, the ballet company would now find itself sharing a house with not one but two opera companies. If it was difficult for the ballet to get its fair share before, it would be well nigh impossible under the Smith scenario.

Squeezed into third place by two rival opera companies, the ballet would inevitably find itself with fewer performances, reduced rehearsal time and a battle for limited resources at an overworked opera house. It wouldn't be long before serious artistic compromises would have to be made. Given that part of the reason for the Opera House's massive redevelopment is to accommodate more dance performances and more dance programmes — in other words, to allow dance to realise its full potential in the new house — this would seem to be a

betrayal of all the promises made to the Royal Ballet.

But look a little closer, and another sequence of events presents itself, one in which the Royal Ballet could find itself king of a different castle. That castle is the Coliseum, current home of English National Opera. The Culture Secretary has suggested that once ENO moves out, the Coliseum could be sold or rented out. One can sympathise with his new Labour desire to save taxpayers' money, but is he really prepared to throw away this theatrical gem? For here is a golden opportunity to secure the future of large-scale dance in London: let the Royal Ballet move to the Coliseum.

As everyone in the dance world knows, the old lady of St Martin's Lane is a superlative dance venue, with wonderful sightlines and a beautiful large stage. The kind of classical extravaganzas offered by the Royal Ballet would look splendid on its stage (as the company will discover next July when it presents its summer season there). And, as Dance Umbrella proved earlier this year with its Mark Morris season, large-scale contemporary dance is eminently saleable at the 2,350-seat Coliseum.

While ENO and the Royal Opera grab the lion's share of performances at Covent Garden, the Royal Ballet could take its big productions to the Coliseum. It could share the house with English National Ballet — which already enjoys Christmas seasons there and would clearly love to expand its Coliseum presence — and there would still be room for visiting foreign companies.

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But when the great Emmylou Harris stepped from the wings to duet on *Goodbye*, so too did the lump in my throat.

NICK KELLY



Room at Covent Garden for all sorts? Lesley Garrett (left) epitomises the ENO style in *Die Fledermaus*; while Darcy Bussell shows the Royal Ballet at its finest in *Amores*



## DANCE

betrayal of all the promises made to the Royal Ballet.

But look a little closer, and another sequence of events presents itself, one in which the Royal Ballet could find itself king of a different castle. That castle is the Coliseum, current home of English National Opera. The Culture Secretary has suggested that once ENO moves out, the Coliseum could be sold or rented out. One can sympathise with his new Labour desire to save taxpayers' money, but is he really prepared to throw away this theatrical gem? For here is a golden opportunity to secure the future of large-scale dance in London: let the Royal Ballet move to the Coliseum.

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With the country's two largest companies performing in a Coliseum designated as a dance house, the provision for large-scale dance in the capital would, at long last, be secured.

There will be those resistant to the idea of taking the ballet out of Covent Garden and some will no doubt fight to keep it there. But if the Government really does foresee a future in which Covent Garden is London's only opera house, the only hope for dance is to find its own home.

If Sir Richard Eyre is going to take his brief seriously — and he undoubtedly will — he must be prepared to fit dance into the equation. The provision of large-scale dance in London is an issue which has been talked about for years. Here is a chance to turn all that talk into action.

DEBRA CRAINE

## POLITICS

make the arts accessible to ordinary people.

So the timing of his announcement — just before he was grilled by Gerald Kaufman — had a whiff of political expediency to it. So did the decision to wrap the proposal in a "review" by the saintly Sir Richard Eyre. Indeed, some feel that Eyre would be one of the few personalities capable of holding together an "all-embracing" Covent Garden.

Nevertheless, Smith's strategy is full of risks. Irrespective of what conclusion Eyre reaches, the Culture Secretary has clearly signalled his views on London's operatic and dance life. Now he must face the wrath of Covent Garden's rich benefactors, the unions (who will suspect, probably correctly, that many jobs could

be shed by two opera companies sharing the same house), and the ardent supporters of the companies and their very different performing and marketing styles.

There is one other intriguing dimension. What has been the role of the Arts Council this week? The answer is: it hasn't had one. The Arts Council has been completely bypassed by the Smith initiative. With a chairman on the way out, and no secretary-general at all, it has effectively been declared irrelevant to the biggest arts debate for decades.

That shatters the "arm's length principle", intended to deter politicians from meddling directly in the running of arts organisations. Whether it also sounds the death-knell for the Arts Council itself remains to be seen.

RICHARD MORRISON

POP: Gutsy country-rock from a reformed Texan rabble-rouser; plus pummelling French electronics

## Blood, sweat and a few tears

There can be few artists currently drawing breath who have walked it and talked it like Steve Earle. A reformed heroin addict who has spent almost as much time behind bars as in them, he has so many former wives that Henry VIII must have been his marriage guidance counsellor.

But if Earle's life story sounds like every social worker's worst nightmare, his music is all the more potent for it. For one can almost taste the blood, sweat and tears shared by the characters in his songs.

More often than not, they are outsiders, outlaws, outspoken. Theirs are lives that walk the high-tension line between self-destruction and redemption.

Indeed, Earle himself seems to have negotiated that wire successfully. He is now apparently drink-free and happily married, and in his spare time he is to be found lending his fervent support to the campaign



Steve Earle

to abolish capital punishment. He has also just released his finest album to date, *El Corazon* — most of which was written while he was on sabbatical in Ireland — and with this concert he kicked off an extensive European tour that reaches London at the end of the month.

Returning to the same venue he played last March, whence he paraded his expertise as a gritty story-telling troubadour in the tradition of his late friend and mentor Townes Van Zandt, this time the Texan-bred singer brought with him the Dukes, a fluid and highly accomplished bunch of musicians. Together they produced what turned out to be, in the end, a hugely satisfying evening of gutsy country-rock and

spine-tingling folk ballads that touched several stylistic bases, from Nashville country to Seattle grunge via Texan folk and even a smattering of bluegrass.

Admittedly it took a while for the band (Buddy Miller, guitar, Kelly Looney, bass, and new recruit Brady Blade, drums) really to get going, owing to evident opening night rustiness, combined with prolonged technical problems with guitar leads which should really have been sorted out during rehearsals and the soundcheck.

Indeed, the band's two roadies were conspicuous by their presence for much of the evening, and even seemed to revel in their visibility.

The two-and-a-quarter-hour set produced many highlights. New songs, such as *Christmas in Washington* and *El Worth Blues* already sound like timeless classics, while the Byrdsian chimes of *If You Fall* neatly slotted in with raucous live favourites like *Copperhead Road* and a rebel-rousing *Johnny Come Lately*.

But when the great Emmylou Harris stepped from the wings to duet on *Goodbye*, so too did the lump in my throat.

NICK KELLY

## Crowd pleasers

The American rock writer Greil Marcus has described Daft Punk as "the best pop group in the history of Paris" — not that there's been much competition since Royce Collard and the Doctoresse. Recently, though, the competition has intensified. The French dance scene has provided a feast of rivals, such as DJ Cam and ICube. Nonetheless, it is still Daft Punk who are having the greatest impact here, especially after the release this year of their debut album *Homework*.

For their first UK tour, which kicked off at the Cambridge Corn Exchange, they have recruited another member of the French new wave, Dimitri from Paris, to act as supporting DJ. His session blends seamlessly with Daft Punk, making the division between DJ and performer ever finer: so fine, in fact, that the Musicians Union has at last recognised DJs as musicians.

The two young Parisians — Guy-Manuel de Homem Christo and Thomas Bangalter — do not so much make music as play the crowd, eliciting whoops and frantic waving as they boost the tempo.

Daft Punk  
Cambridge

Their show is organised around ruthlessly pared-down rhythms, each built from scraps of noise. There are no melodies or voices, no songs, just pummelling beats and truncated riffs. Daft Punk's sound is pure electronics; there is little attempt to emulate traditional instruments. It harks and wheezes, screeches and fizzes.

The two performers stand alone in the centre of the vast stage, their faces cast in shadow. Around them are scattered a barrage of lighting effects, where bulbs flash and twitch restlessly. Further distraction comes from a twin screen backdrop onto which are projected images of breakdancers, of mock brand names and of swirling patterns.

This is not an event for those who want to nod gently to well-crafted songs. It is for those who want to dance to the music of technology.

JOHN STREET

## Freedom chained

If the few moments of profound music-making, rewarding listening and genuine flair scattered through Butch Morris's ten-CD retrospective *Testament* are anything to go by, the odds are that not many of his seven UK appearances will contain these ingredients. During the past 20 years, Morris has abandoned a career as a major creative force in jazz in favour of pursuing his theory of "Conduction".

Essentially this involves using a vocabulary of formal gesture to direct ensemble improvisation, using no score or prearranged material, but simply relying on the improvisatory resources of his musicians and on his own ability to shape their performance with his baton. At the heart of this idea is a paradox — how could a performance be freely improvised if it is being conducted?

In Morris's *Conduction No 84*, given at the Oxford Contemporary Music Festival, his 22-piece ensemble contained a galaxy of Britain's best-known free players, but it seemed many of them were inhibited by this very paradox. The size of the ensemble suppressing the improvisatory ideas of its members. Only violinist Aleks Kolkowski and trumpeter Byron Wallen — who may have lost marks from his stony-faced colleagues for not mov-

JAZZ  
Butch Morris  
Oxford

ing about and (b) smiling — created lengthy enough and sufficiently shaped solo parts to emerge from the mêlée. Even soprano saxophonist Evan Parker, normally so resourceful on such occasions, seemed to resort to self-parody when Morris encouraged him to be heard.

The concert became an exercise in texture. Since (apart from a handful of passages spurred by Morris's downbeats) the performance was largely arrhythmic, and since so little melodic content surfaced, it could hardly be otherwise.

There were moments when Morris conjured some sublime shadings from his ensemble, especially in his handling of the strings, making use of Zoe Martlew's cello arpeggios and Philipp Wachsmann's laconic viola glissandi. But in more than 90 minutes of music, texture alone is insufficient to hold an audience's attention, and by the last piece a third of the crowd had voted with their feet.

ALYN SHIMTON



هكذا من الراحل

## The incredible journey

DONALD COOPER

If the word is not too strong, Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was obsessed with *The Pilgrim's Progress* all his life. He first wrote incidental music for a dramatization in 1906; the "work-in-progress" *Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains* followed in 1922; more music for a BBC radio dramatization came in 1942. When the complete opera was performed at Covent Garden in 1951 it was on the whole scurvily received, which must have wounded the composer.

Nearly 50 years on, you can see why. One result of VW's lifelong concern was that the score could have been composed at almost any time this



Religious fervor: Pamela Helen Stephen (Madam Bubble), Gerald Finley (Pilgrim), Rebecca Evans (Madam Wanton)

century, if not before. With its harmonies seldom straying beyond the world of *Hymns AEM*, its unashamed, wholesome religiosity and warm, unquestioning bed of choral and orchestral triumphalism, it must have sounded antediluvian to ears growing accustomed to Britten (*Billy Budd* was premiered the same year), let alone to whatever was going on in Darmstadt. One can well imagine modernists sniggering behind their hands at this "cowpat" music.

But with the passing of time such out-of-synch disparity matters less. The sheer fervour of the writing and its profoundly held conviction sweep all before it, certainly through the short first two acts. Its problems as an opera — and Ernest Newman thought it belonged in a cathedral rather than an opera house — stem from a certain lack of dramatic conflict. *Pilgrim* doesn't have to do a lot of his own bad when he is in trouble, there is always someone to see him through, be it an encouraging Watchful or the consoling Branch-Bearer and Cup-Bearer; and there's a Key of Promise to get him out of jail. Even threats of death carry little weight, since his whole journey is to the hereafter.

Such quibbles carried equally little weight during Monday's semi-staged performance by the Royal Opera, which was simply superb. Richard Hickox conducted with as much passion and devotion as if this were some

divine conflation of *Parsifal* and the Verdi Requiem, and the orchestral sound alone drew up unprotestingly to sharing VW's certainties. Joseph Ward's staging — a matter of platforms (Michael Holt) and light (John B. Read) — gave a clear impression of what drama there is, probably clearer than in any conventional production.

Gerald Finley's performance of the

title role was beyond all praise, sung with beautifully firm tone and acted without a hint of embarrassment. There were equally vivid performances from Gidon Saks (Apollon), Hate-Goat (all), and from Anne-Marie Owens and Richard Cooten as the By-Ends in the quickly comic scene much criticised at the time, but a very necessary leaving after the Delectable

shepherds (the weakest part of the score, oddly enough). Jeremy White (Evangelist), Roderick Williams (Watchful) and Gwynne Howell (Bunyan) performed their pious duties with tact, and the whole company went for Vanity Fair hammer and tongs. VW won, hands down.

RODNEY MILNES

## Making merrier

After its decidedly downbeat opening but with an alternate cast now firmly in place, the Royal Opera's *Merry Widow* has begun to pick up a little. Alas, not so the audience: at last week when one might at least have expected Lesley Garrett's Valenciennes to have been packing them in, there were rows of empty seats in what felt like a ghost town but was in fact the Shaftesbury Theatre.

Putting aside, if possible, the unbelievably drab production, there is now a show to be enjoyed here. Of course, Lehar's masterpiece really needs a bit of glitz, and in a West End run of 30 performances intended to draw people in, the set is the wrong place to be making economies. But the production has settled down musically, with Dietfried Berner now conducting with greater flexibility and real Viennese feeling, and most of the cast now getting Jeremy Sam's sly translation across with relish and clarity.

## The Merry Widow

Shaftesbury

Lyuba Kazarnovskaya is strong-casting in the title role. Her soprano has a slight edge and top notes are not her speciality, but she sings a seductive *Vilja* and you can believe in her as the spirited farmer's daughter made good. There is erotic charge in her relationship with Dale Duesing's Danilo, who makes up for a rather dry baritone with his comic timing, turning in a real performance.

Current's Valenciennes (her Royal Opera stage debut) has

## Sounds of the South

RECITAL

Pacific Village

Wigmore Hall

never left the Paris of Les Six. He spins a thread of easy modal fluency, beautifully executed here by *Isleris* and the pianist Susan Tomes, who also gave a graceful reading of David Fanshawe's *The Awakening*. Again, the raw panpipes and drums of the Solomon Islands seemed to bear little relation to Fanshawe's dreamy, diatonic response.

Carl Vine's inventive *Inner World* for solo cello and tape had a true "Pacific" taste, however, with its mixture of high-tech, West Coast rhythmic drive and outlandish harmonic world, whose voca-

bulary derives from the sounds of the cello itself, computer-altered and interwoven with the playing of another cellist, David Pereira. Barry Humphries joined in for Grant Belgarian's *Of Fables, Fables and Fancies*, written for Gregor Platigorsky, whom he appointed while music dean of the University of Southern California. Isserlis caught the quirky humour of these tall tales with aplomb.

Then came Ross Edwards and Barry Humphries's *Cries of Australia*, commissioned for the occasion. It was in the guise of the "late" Sandy Stone that Humphries arrived for this disingenuous monologue on his wife Beryl and her table manners. Isserlis was cast as the refugee next door, driving poor Beryl to distraction with his cello practice (an irony not lost on a Wigmore audience). The *Chopsticks*, miraculously turned into a perfectly reasonable accompaniment to the famous melody of Schubert's *E flat Piano Trio* — was quite a *coup de grâces*.

HELEN WALLACE

## LONDON

**ROMEO AND JULIET** Ray Fearon and Zoe Wauters play the kids in love. Short London run for Michael Aspinborough's production before returning to Stratford.

**THE SLOW DRAG** Jazz musical by Carson Kressley, loosely based on the story of Billy Holiday, a woman who passed as a man to find work as a jazz musician. Lara Sedov plays Kim Cressley and Christopher Colquhoun from Les Follies de Freedom Colquhoun.

**LA MALADIE DE LA MORT** Robert Wilson's visually exquisite production of the Marguerite Duras play, with Michel Piccoli and dancer Lucille Childs. In French with English subtitles. Part of the French Theatre Season.

**CHRISTIANITY QUARTET** The popular chamber ensemble celebrates its 25th anniversary with a recital of Haydn's String Quartet in G followed by a world premiere of a new work from Robert Saxton. For the evening's second half, the Quartet is joined by the Endellion Quartet in a performance of Mendelssohn's Octet.

**ISCHIBURY CELEBRATION** The baritone Matthias Goerne accompanied by Andreas Harig, piano, sings a choice selection of the Austrian composer's songs inspired by Goethe's poems. A number of Hugo

## TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mari Hargre

Wolf's dramatic settings of *Mohr* are offered in a production by Schürer's latest style.

**ELSEWHERE** *Blackpool*: Film *Brum* produced by Steven for a Secret Service to be told by the award-winning European dance iconoclast, Wim Vandevoort. In his new work the Belgian choreographer and his company *Viz* explore the image of the

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**Schubert is celebrated at the Queen Elizabeth Hall**

## THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only  
Some seats available  
Seats at all prices

**National (Columbia)**, South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2282) Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm in rep.

**KAT AND THE KING** Excellent musical set in Cape Town as rock'n'roll music over South Africa. A great evening out.

**DELICATE BALANCE** Elinor Allens hauntingly chilling in welcome return of *Abel*'s play about marriage, parenthood and neglect.

**AN IDEAL HUSBAND** Return of Peter Hall's evocative production of the comedy, starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward.

**THE INVENTION OF LOVE** Tom Stoppard's new play with John Wood as the dandy A. E. Housman, careful to keep his love life private.

**AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN PARIS** (18) Amusingly creepy horror comic, with Tom Everett Scott as an American student who falls for the charms of John Dwyer's werewolf Director, Anthony Water.

**POOL RIPS IN** (18) Strikingly gay cut-out with marriage to a fairy. Musical-American, Theatre runs into comedy with Matthew Perry and Salma Hayek. Director, Andy Tennant.

**CONFIDENTIAL** (18) Striking drama about corruption in LA in the early 1950s, with Kevin Spacey, Russell Crowe, Tom Berenger, Guy Pearce and Danny DeVito. Director, Curtis Hanson.

**THE FULL MONTY** (18) Bouncing drama about unemployment and for cash. Bouncy British comedy, with Robert Carlyle, Tom Wilkinson, Mark Addy, Adrian Baker. Director, Peter Jackson.

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e journey

# Most original director of the century?

As London experiences another of Robert Wilson's forays into the challenging - and confusing - Andy Lavender talks to him

Contemplating Robert Wilson requires a range of facial movements. First, the eyes should widen at the evidence of this polymath's activities. Wilson has been making influential artworks - theatre and opera stagings, installations, sculptures, furniture and paintings - since the late 1960s. He is best known for his visually striking stage productions, which he designs, lights and directs himself. According to John Rockwell, the director of New York's Lincoln Centre Festival, he is "the most original director of this century". This is faint praise when set against the enthusiasm of a number of European arts figures, who see Wilson as the unique exponent of spectacular escapism for the intelligentsia.

Secondly, the chin drops in awe at the list of collaborators with whom Wilson has worked. Philip Glass, David Byrne, Heiner Müller, Lou Reed, Jessye Norman, William Burroughs, Tom Waits, Laurie Anderson... you could hardly hope to assemble a more cultish collection. Then comes the respectful pursing of the lips at the detail which Wilson lavishes on his shows. His recent one-man version of *Hamlet*, for instance, contained more than 300 lighting cues. "I've worked on shows with Bob where he's had a follow-spot on a performer's finger," says one of his stage managers.

Compare this with the scale of *KA MOUNTAIN*, an event staged on a mountain in Iran in 1972 that lasted for seven days and featured 500 actors. This suggests the spirit of Wilson's work: magnificent folly combined with the rigorous attention of the purist.

Finally, two raised eyebrows. One signals the reserve with which some critics approach Wilson's work, finding its formalism too remote, trivial or empty (in some instances, all three). The other indicates the rather eccentric behaviour of the man himself, who conforms to a range of stereotypes concerning the pressurised artist-genius. There is the instance when the novelist Edmund White flew from Paris to New York to interview Wilson in his

apartment, only to be given a guided tour and not allowed to ask questions of his own. Or the story about Wilson walking out of a hairdresser's salon two hours into a hair coloration, only to return the next day demanding that the job be finished.

So it was no small satisfaction to discover myself, after several false starts, in conversation with Wilson about his production of *La Maladie de la Mort*, which opens in London tonight as part of the French Theatre Season. The show is a version of Marguerite Duras's novel about a man who hires a woman, perhaps in a last attempt at feeling. In

Wilson's hands Duras's story has become a chamber piece set in an abstract room which opens on to some sort of seascape. As the show progresses, the "outside" becomes more evident, until in one scene the space is reversed and the characters are in the open - a characteristic visual turn.

Wilson's methods of making theatre involve a strange marriage between the kind of free-association favoured by the surrealists and a fierce formalist discipline. On the one hand the most open mind, on the other the most steely grip. What really makes things different is that Wilson's theatrical solutions often have little to do with the actual work he is staging.

"I start by thinking about a structure," he says. "I usually find for myself some kind of diagram or outline. With *La Maladie* I thought of the number seven, as an even number which had three points and

another three points, around a central point. So the piece had a centre. This is not necessarily in the text. It's something I imposed along the way. And it's not necessary that the audience knows what that something is about. I thought of the number seven because Marguerite once told me that the piece takes place over the course of a week, so it's seven days."

A mere step from this, you can imagine, to a show in seven sections revolving around a scene where the balance shifts from one side of the stage to the other. If it all sounds dauntingly schematic, consider the response of the critic Marc Robinson, who attended the premiere in Berlin five years ago. The production, he suggested, is "attentive to matters of the heart and spirit, with an intensity that makes for emotionally rich performance".

The show has been recast since then. Now it features the celebrated French actor Michel Piccoli and the dancer Lucinda Childs, a long-standing Wilson collaborator. Wilson says the piece has changed as a result, and enthuses about the obvious differences between his two performers as if this somehow enhances Duras's themes of dependence and loneliness.

"Michel Piccoli by nature is very simple in his appearance," Wilson says. "His strength is in his restraint. He's a very modest man. Even though what he's doing on stage is what you'd call acting, it's very natural. Lucinda, on the other hand, is very artificial. Her movements are not the kind of movements that you would see on the street. They're made for the stage."

Wilson's work itself delights in its own artifice, so it is no surprise to find him teaming up with Duras. "Marguerite's works are very formal," says Wilson, "but in a formal theatre, believe it or not, if it's done well there's very deep emotion. It's not like Broadway."

*La Maladie de la Mort* is at Sadler's Wells at the Peacock Theatre (017-334 8800) until Saturday, sponsored by Global Asset Management.



There's only one Robert Wilson, arts polymath and idol of some of theatre's most influential figures

## Death rows

THREE high-school boys in Vancouver, wildly drunk, rape a nameless girl. One of them goes overboard and uses a screwdriver. They wake up with three hangovers, one corpse, and no idea which of them killed her.

Robert William Sherwood's gripping play starts 15 years after the students have buried the truth and gone their separate ways. One of the trio, Peter, is seeking absolution. He has discovered God, told his Saskatchewan girlfriend the story, and has hitched back to Vancouver to get Gordon and David to repent. It is here that Sherwood's play moves beyond its sensational material to a series of delicately crafted encounters that have the sort of mythic quality of a big screen showdown.

With the evidence roned away, Peter's only lever is the truth. But his memory of the

Absolution  
BAC, SW11

truth is starkly different to that of Gordon and David. Time has also played tricks with their memory of each other. David, the high-school achiever, has sunk into an anonymous job as a proof-reader, while Gordon has grown into an aggressive, womanising business tycoon.

James Merrells manages to make the caricatured excesses of Gordon into his strengths, exploding with palpable venom at Peter's insistence on some collective moral responsibility. James Holmes puts in a fantastically convincing performance as the long-haired Peter, whose every night is haunted by the horror of the victim's face and whose salvation is painfully unravelled by David's dry logic. "The word was never made flesh," says Timothy Deenihan's inscrutable David. "Not only are you stupid enough to believe it, you're stupid enough to believe it in translation."

What Sherwood makes flesh is that truth with no evidence is only words. Not since Brad Fraser's *Unidentified Human Remains* and *The True Nature of Love* has a Canadian play so graphically captured that edgy dislocation between human waste and meaning.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

CONCERTS: Orchestral strength and solo inspiration from North America

## A little goes a very long way

Whitman-like, the orchestras of the United States sing America with a great tongue. Many have paraded through London this year, each one a great multinational but with an individual voice that remains vivid - and none more so than the quietly civilised and civilising Indianapolis Symphony, which visited London as the grand finale to its third European tour.

At just 87 strong, the ISO can function as both chamber ensemble and full-grown symphony orchestra. Its Festival Hall programme of Stravinsky, Mozart and Tchaikovsky epitomised the classically grounded style of the supple language, with its many European inflections, that it has learnt to speak so eloquently in the past decade under the artistic directorship of Raymond Leppard.

The orchestra's first and last notes drew attention to the elegant string textures spun by a band with a fine quartet of principals at its heart. The encore - the orchestral version of the slow movement of Tchaikovsky's First String

Quartet - was a cunning choice. It signed and sealed the quality of the ensemble playing heard at the very start, in the opening bars of Stravinsky's Divertimento from *The Fairy's Kiss*.

This was the work in which Stravinsky paid warm, if oblique, homage to Tchaikovsky. His skill, and that of Leppard and the ISO in recreation, was to assimilate Tchaikovsky's themes in such a way that the ear is left with a sense of something fugitive, an elusive remembrance of things past woven inextricably into a new, living present.

This tugging of past and present is very much at the heart of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony. Its tension pulses through the slow movement's song, and the cellos' response to the oboe's bittersweet *canzona* was transformed cogently by Leppard into a continuing momentum of new affirmation.

After a hard-working Scher-

zo, taken at a tempo in which the massed pizzicato could really be voiced, the finale, with its sure pacing and close-focus articulation, was an exultant vindication of the entire performance's powerful concentration and clarity.

The Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky framed Stephen Kovacevich's performance of

## Spirit and Polish

MUSIC may be a universal language, but with two infrequently played Polish works featured in Monday's BBC Symphony Orchestra concert alongside Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, it made good sense to have a Polish conductor on the podium. Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, an old pro in the best sense, undoubtedly brought a feeling of authenticity to the proceedings.

Even so, it was the Canadian Chantall Jullien's performance in Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No 2 that proved most memorable. With smallish but sweet tone, she turned the opening into

Mozart's C minor Piano Concerto, K491. This was the cue for the ISO's woodwind to come into its own. In a beautifully enunciated if somewhat austere performance, the sharply individual voices provided character and diversion just where they were needed.

HILARY FINCH

BBC SO/  
Skrowaczewski  
Festival Hall

an outpouring of endless melody, and under her fingers the music took flight. Just occasionally, in moments where the conductor seemed reluctant to let it flow, the orchestra sounded earthbound, but in the second, folk-inspired section of this unbroken score the notes positively danced.

The conductor brought a similar understanding to Penderecki's bleak Sinfonietta for Strings. If anything was lacking here it was the fault of the music itself, since although the work is concise and well crafted, it inhabits a single emotional plain that suggests Shostakovich without that composer's characteristic depth.

The orchestra sounded at its best in the *Pathétique*, capturing the autumnal glow of the music. The wind solos had real warmth. Only the scherzo-march was a little ragged, but then there was compensation in its exciting swagger. Skrowaczewski shaped a distinctive performance, particularly in an unsettling first movement marked by fluid tempos and volatile climaxes. The waltz-like *Allegro con grazia* had a heavier tread than usual, good preparation for the unbearable intensity of the finale. As always in any worthwhile performance of this ambiguous work, one was left wondering whether Tchaikovsky really did intend it as his own Requiem.

JOHN ALLISON

## GREAT BRITISH HOPES

### Rising stars in the arts firmament

#### ANDREW CHETTY

Age: 28.  
Profession: Artistic director.  
Here and NOW: He runs NOW ninety 7, Nottingham's month-long festival of music, new technology, dance, performance and installation. It continues until November 16.

Talking about his generation: "I've radically repackaged NOW to focus on what's most exciting for younger artists and audiences, people aged 18 to 35. The performance groups we feature, like Blast Theory and Reckless, fit my notion of doing art for the sake of doing it, not for the money."

Theatre was his first love: He grew up in Whickham, near Gateshead. His parents

introduced him to drama at the Newcastle Playhouse when he was about 13. "Right from the first play I saw, *The Merchant of Venice*, I was really captured."

Design for a living: After a degree in theatre design at Nottingham Polytechnic, he produced sets and costumes for, among others, the Birmingham-based African People's Theatre and the London Contemporary Dance Theatre.

Why did he change direction? "Ruth McKenzie, who was then executive director of the Nottingham Playhouse, said 'Andrew, you're not a very good designer', and suggested I become a theatre producer. I haven't regretted it."



Best moment? A Saturday during NOW ninety 5. "We had about 2,500 people, from small kids to pensioners, queuing up to watch Blast Theory perform a piece of experimental theatre in a 30ft-square black box. It was great to see such a wide cross-section of people transfixed by something they'd never have gone to see otherwise."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL

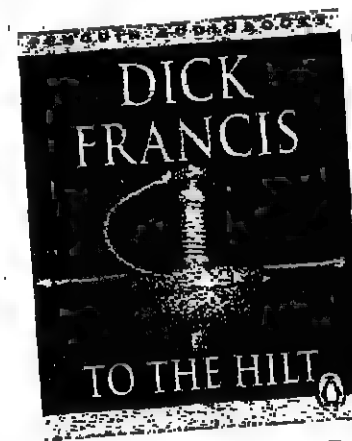
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CHANGING TIMES







# Injecting new life into England's oldest street

Sue Herdman

reports on plans to revive a semi-derelict street in an historic city

A street said to be England's oldest is soon to be given a 20th-century facelift. King Street in Norwich, according to Mike Loveday, Norwich council's head of planning, took shape before the 10th century. Now plans have been submitted that aim to use the street's semi-derelict St Anne's Wharf as a catalyst that will help to regenerate the city centre. The scheme is one of a wave of developments that should help to restore urban vibrancy to Britain.

A spokeswoman from the Urban Villages Forum, which works to create mixed urban developments, says: "Provide the right balance of facilities and homes, and people will move into once-blighted inner city areas."

In Manchester stunning but derelict Georgian and Victorian cotton mills are being transformed into urban villages in former no-go ghettos such as Hulme and Ancoats. A decade ago the population of Manchester city centre was just 350. Today it is 4,000 and is expected to grow to at least 10,000 in the next five years.

Similar projects are under way in Birmingham's historic Jewellery quarter. In the heart of Glasgow's Gorbals, in Sheffield's Manor and in London's King's Cross, where the seven conservation areas, Regent's Canal and significant green spaces have up to now been largely left in grimey neglect.

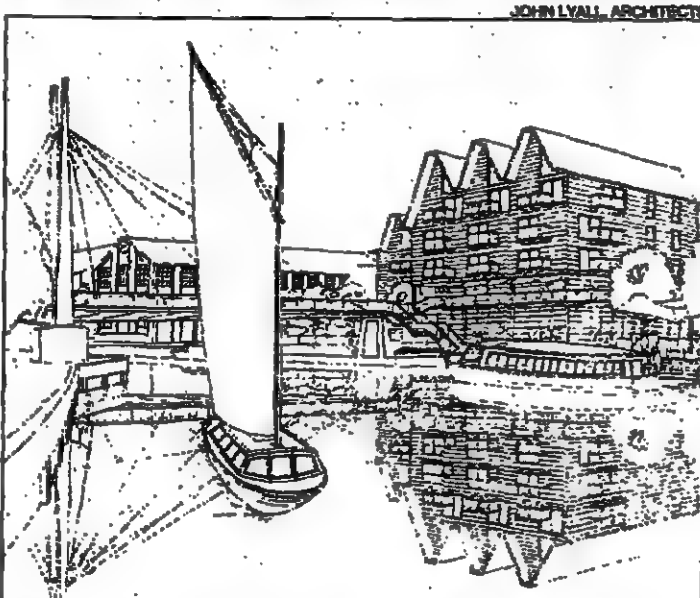
The King Street plans in Norwich include the reinstatement of medieval street patterns and the wrapping of a glossy modernist development around the ancient Dragon Hall, believed to be the only medieval merchant trading hall left in Europe.

By the millennium there will be the ubiquitous trendy loft apartments for sale here, part of a lively Docklands-type setting.

The atmosphere in King Street today is both one of gentle dereliction and artisan elegance: the street itself is a curious tapestry of architectural gems seriously blighted



Norwich's Dragon Hall in King Street and planning drawings for the redevelopment of the semi-derelict St Anne's Wharf



ed by unattractive 1970s warehouses.

The ancient deconsecrated churches of St Peter's and St Andrew's (parish churches were the leather workers who were once here) and St Etheldreda are still beautiful but crumbling. Their porches house beer-soaked sleeping bags belonging to the homeless, their gates provide a leaning post to wan-faced young women playing the oldest trade in the world.

But it was not always like this. In the 12th century the street housed the wealthy Jewish quarter and was packed with fine timber-framed houses and merchant

premises, friaries and taverns. It was home to the wealthy and well-connected, including Anne Boleyn's grandfather, William, and the Dukes of Norfolk.

In the 19th century light industry arrived with tanneries, maltings, shoe factories and breweries. When those industries declined, some as recently as in the last decade, Norwich seemed to turn its back on the area, leaving the remaining exquisite medieval houses to the pumps and their girls.

The architect at work on the project is John Lyall. At the moment it is hard to say how well his plans are going to work. The

stark architect's drawings demand a vivid imagination. He proposes concrete-framed buildings which will frame a tree-lined piazza with the already established Waterfront Club (a music and comedy venue) at one end and at the other a landscaped square.

The buildings will be clad with timber boarding, glass, brick and flint and will house airy three-storey flats with steep pitch roofs, lots of light and balconies overlooking the river.

Underneath the flats will be bars and restaurants with a waterfront promenade which will run past shops, galleries, studios and workshops.

But how will these look nestled beside and behind the ancient Music House (the oldest dwelling in the city) and the elegant Howard House (the past city home to the Dukes of Norfolk)?

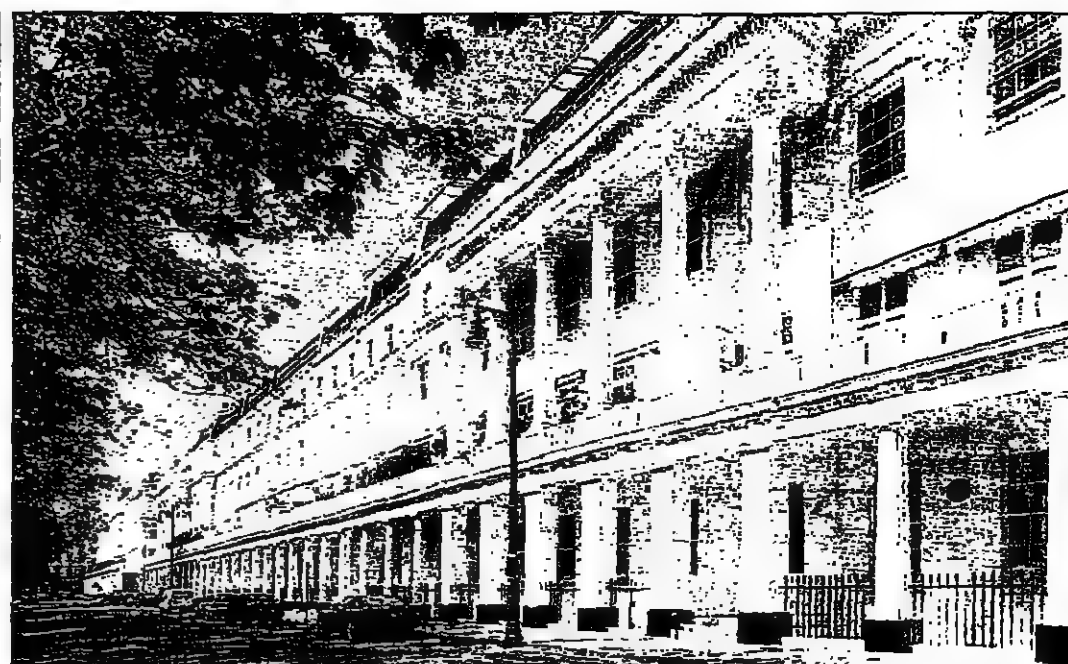
Mr Lyall is sure his modernist approach will work. "These designs will fit in with the local vernacular and bring a refreshing spirit of modernism," he says. "The process is like dentistry—we'll take out the rotten parts, such as the industrial sheds and brewery buildings, and assess the quality of what's left."

Ken Powell, director of the 20th Century Society, believes in Mr Lyall's approach. "He has a reputation for thoroughly modern urban repair and restoration," he says. "Which has been very successful in projects such as the restoration of the Grade I Corn Exchange and its surrounds in Leeds. That development was pivotal to the regeneration of the city."

If the success of Lyall's Covent Garden-type scheme in Leeds is anything to go by, the future of St Anne's Wharf looks promising. Certainly, the £30 million project has, so far, been enthusiastically received. The creation of jobs, homes, even a new heritage museum, is welcomed. Terry Elliott Shroore, a King Street resident, says: "The rejuvenation will force improvement along the whole length of the street."

Norwich City Council's head of planning, says: "The development will be important in linking the city with the river."

Work should start on the scheme next spring. The first phase and first loft flats will go on sale in 2000. Only then shall we see whether this particular urban village project has worked and whether King Street has retained its artisan air.



For houses and flats, Eaton Square in Belgravia is the most favoured address of the very wealthy

## Belgravia beats Holland Park

What are the best addresses in London, asks Diana Wildman

A new survey of central London estate agents has revealed that Eaton Square, Chester Square and Wilton Crescent are the most desirable London addresses. For flats, Eaton Square, Cadogan Square and Cadogan Place are, say the 34 agents surveyed, the best addresses.

This obsession with Belgravia is interesting because, until recently, many estate agents said that the area, compared with neighbouring Chelsea, was losing its appeal for many wealthy buyers.

The reasons, we were told, are twofold. First, overseas buyers—who form the bulk of purchasers at the top end of the market—much prefer to buy freehold properties. These abound in Kensington and Chelsea but are virtually non-existent in Belgravia.

Secondly, the restrictions imposed on commercial and residential properties by the Grosvenor Estate, which owns the freehold of most of Belgravia, deterred buyers.

But Nick Pearce of the Sloane Square agents, Beany Pearce, says this is changing. "Buyers are more informed about the 1993 Leasehold Reform Act and realise that they can enfranchise and extend their lease," he says. "We get many potential buyers who refused to buy into Belgravia three or four years ago, but they know that

the possibility now exists to extend a lease."

Eaton Square has always had huge cachet, despite being bisected by a busy road. But Lorna Vestey of Knight Frank is surprised to see Chesham Place taking fifth place in the flat stakes. She says: "Sales over the past two years have shown

"I recently had an extremely wealthy New York client, with several homes worldwide, keen to buy in Eaton Square but whose knowledge of London was limited," he continues. "I tried to suggest other places to look at too but there was no point. He had heard only of Eaton Square."

The fact that beautiful houses overlooking acres of private gardens exist in Notting Hill and that there are grand detached mansions in Holland Park matters not a jot to certain agents who seem keen only to promote areas of international prominence.

Ms Vestey is an exception. "English families, on the whole, want houses with gardens and you tend not to find these in Belgravia," she says. "This is why freehold houses in Kensington and Chelsea have seen the biggest price rises over the past two years. Eaton Square may be the best flat address in London but it is almost unknown as a house address because few of the houses are available for sale."

There are lots of multi-million-pound houses in Kensington and Holland Park, in areas such as Victoria Road, Phillimore Gardens and Addison Road, which we believe should definitely have been included in this survey.

### CAPITAL PLACES

London's best house addresses

- 1 Eaton Square, SW1
- 2 Chester Square, SW1
- 3 Wilton Crescent, SW1
- 4 The Boltons, SW10
- 5 Belgrave Square SW1
- 6 Egerton Crescent SW3
- 7 Cadogan Place SW1
- 8 Egerton Terrace SW3
- 9 Gilston Road SW10
- 10 Chelsea Square SW3

Chesham Place to be central London's most valuable address, far outperforming miles per square foot in Eaton Square."

It is the cachet of Eaton Square together with its location that attracts so much interest, particularly among overseas buyers. A number of these, unfamiliar with London, will live nowhere else, according to Mr Pearce, not least because it is the only place with which they are familiar.

## Why one of Britain's oldest estate agencies is changing its name

Savills, the estate agent that has handled sales of houses as spacious as Hever Castle, the Astors' family home, and Earl Peel's Gutterside estate in North Yorkshire, is to be renamed FPD Savills in January. The change comes after the sale of 20 per cent of its shares to the Hong Kong property group First Pacific Davies last week for £17 million.

Savills is the second agent to change name recently. In January, 1996, Rutley vanished from Knight Frank sale boards. The firm's image was one of dealing with ancestral estates, but more than half its business involves office blocks and industrial sites. The partners wanted to swap the impression of tweedy gentlemen land agents for the sleek image of an international corporation.

The rebranding of Savills, one of the oldest estate agencies, founded by Alfred Savill in 1855, signals the company's plans to expand in the US. Savills hopes to take a stake in an American estate agency and to strengthen its continental links.

Mr Savill set up business as a land agent, surveyor and auctioneer at 27 Rood Lane, London EC3. The firm became Alfred Savill & Sons in 1886, when Alfred took his son into partnership. His grandsons followed in the early 1900s. In 1967, Alfred Savill & Sons merged with the West End firm Curtis & Henson, and in 1972 changed its name to Savills. The firm became a limited company in 1987, and won a stock market listing in 1988.

The rebranding will involve changing 34 estate agency shops in Britain and 36 shops overseas, not to mention numerous sale boards advertising houses and estates for sale. The company has refused to disclose the cost of rebranding, but has commissioned a new logo from a design consultancy.

The firm currently has 36 offices in Europe, but none in America. It was previously associated with the US estate agency Galbreath, a tie broken last summer when Galbreath was sold to Lasalle,



## America beckons a grand old firm

another American agency, Godfrey Blott, FPD's managing director, said: "I expect we'll announce something in about three months. We need to address entering the American market. If you want to compete with, say, Jones Lang Wootton, you've got to look like them."

JLW is the biggest British surveying firm overseas, and Savills, with 800 employees, is among the top ten international surveying firms.

Pressure for a US expansion had come from existing FPD clients such as IBM

and Motorola, Mr Blott added. Several American firms have already approached Savills.

FPD is based in Hong Kong, with 18 offices in eight Asian cities, and the rest in Australia. The FPD group of companies, listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange, has a market capitalisation of £1.5 billion. Savills' commercial and residential agency business will be rebranded, but the holding company, Savills plc, is not affected.

RACHEL KELLY

## Mortgage rates push up prices

How paying for a home will take more of your salary

HIGHER mortgage rates and rising house prices are likely to push up the cost of houses and flats by nearly 17 per cent by Christmas, new figures show.

Homeowners spend on average £27 out of every £100 of take-home pay on their mortgage. By Christmas, according to the Cheltenham & Gloucester's "affordability index", they can expect to pay £31.50, making housebuying the most expensive it has been for five years.

Twelve months ago the cost of buying a home was just £24.90, the index shows. Since then, it has become more expensive to buy a house. This is because rising mortgage

rates and increasing house prices have outweighed the benefits of rising salaries and tax changes.

Sue Anderson of the Council for Mortgage Lenders says such figures should be viewed in context. She adds: "Buying a house is affordable if one looks at long-term trends, although housebuying has become more expensive recently because of the interest rates rises and reduction in tax relief on mortgage interest payments."

Relief on mortgage interest

payments is being reduced to 10 per cent from April 6, from the present level of 15 per cent. In 1994, relief was available on 25 per cent of mortgage interest payments. This means that a property costing £31,000 will fall into the same tax-relief bracket as a £200,000 property.

Roger Burdett, the managing director of Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, says: "In the early 1990s our index showed buyers spending about £70 in every £100 of take-home pay on mortgages.

Rates peaked at more than 15 per cent."

The rise has not reached the levels of earlier this decade. First-time buyers now have to spend on average only 11.9 per cent of their income on their mortgage, compared with 25.3 per cent back in 1990. This fall in initial repayments is caused mostly by the fall in interest rates, which have fallen from 14.99 per cent in 1990 to just 6.78 per cent by the second quarter of 1997.

Ms Anderson says: "Interest rate rises are most likely to affect those on the margins, who are just managing to afford their mortgages."

NEIL HUDSON

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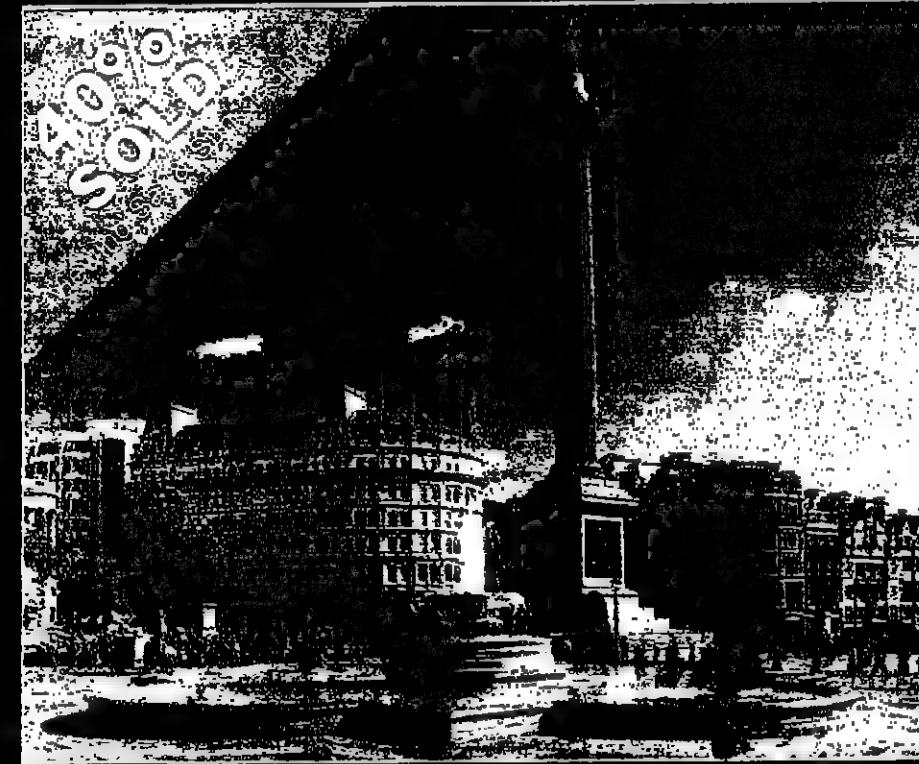


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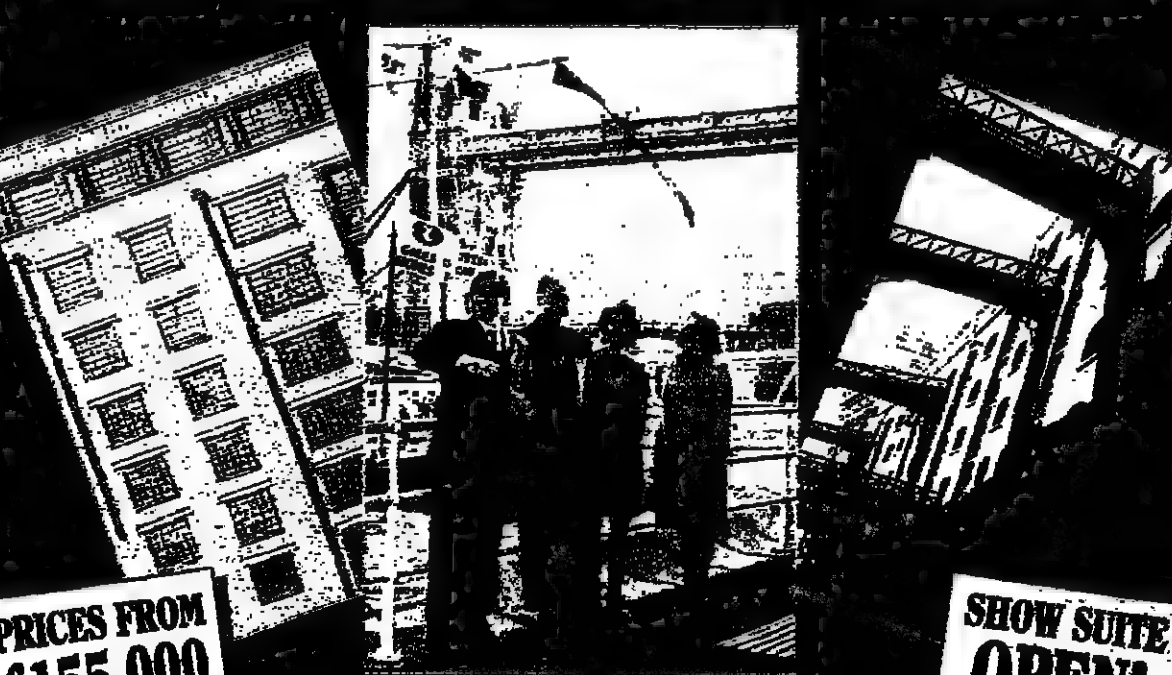
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Viking lifts glc fighting

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## RACING

# Viking Flagship lifts gloom with fighting display

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

RACES have been run at what is now called Exeter racecourse since the reign of Charles I came to a sticky end in 1649, but few can have surpassed the spectacle which unfolded yesterday as Viking Flagship outbatted Mulligan, his junior stable companion, in a memorable renewal of the William Hill Merton Gold Cup Stakes.

If the first of the Queen Mother Champion Chase was not sufficient this early in the season, National Hunt enthusiasts can now relish the prospect of a repeat performance or performances between the two David Nicholson-trained chasers.

Both have been pencilled in for the Tingle Creek Chase at Sandown and the Castleford Chase at Wetherby. "If they clash, they clash. Neither owner bets, both love the sport and that is what it is all about," Nicholson said.

Even the fog, which swirled for most of the afternoon around the historic racecourse perched on the top of Telegraph Hill, seemed to lift briefly as the six runners made their way to post.

In the betting ring, punters appeared to be distinctly agist in their preferences. Viking Flagship, something of a veteran at ten, was allowed to drift from an opening 7-1 to an insulating 9-1, while Mulligan, three years his junior, was 2-4, with Ask Tom installed the 7-4 favourite.

Mulligan, a faller at Cheltenham and Aintree last sea-

son, set a demanding pace from the start under Adrian Maguire. Gales - Cavalier, race-fit after a recent Wincanton victory, tried briefly to keep up with the gallop but soon found it too much and it was left to Ask Tom to jump alongside the leader from the fourth to seventh fences.

All the time, Viking Flagship stalked the pacemakers.

**Singspiel scare**

Singspiel, the favourite for the Breccia Cup Turf at Hollywood Park on Saturday, has suffered a minor foot problem. His trainer, Michael Stoute, postponed a workout planned for yesterday but expects Singspiel to be fit to exercise today. "We had a little problem," Stoute said. "We were rather concerned but he is fine. He can live with it." Ladbrokes makes Singspiel 5-4 favourite from evens.

Initially some lengths away before creeping closer.

Unexpectedly, Ask Tom suddenly faded tamerly and was pulled up before the third last, leaving Mulligan with a generous lead which looked sure to be converted into victory.

But as he turned for home, the demanding pace was beginning to take its toll and Viking Flagship, travelling well, loomed up alongside.

Richard Johnson waited until just before the last before making the lead and any hopes Mulligan's supporters may have retained were dashed by a magnificent leap from Viking Flagship.

Nicholson, visibly moved, said: "I have never had one like him. He has won over £500,000 in prize money. He came back to us before our open day on August 17. Usually we don't get him back until the end of September and the way he has been working at home, I knew he was right."

Johnson said: "Viking Flagship was struggling for the first half of the race, which made me think they must have been going pretty quickly. But he gradually got into it and he jumped up the straight like a superstar. He has been doing it for years and knows more about the game than I do."

Tom Tate, the trainer of Ask Tom, was nonplussed by the poor performance of the favourite. "He was well, fit and fancied. We are grasping at straws. The only thing I can think of is that he has never travelled overnight before. He has not eaten an oat but I am not putting that forward as an explanation."

The magnificent duel between Nicholson's horses could not have been better timed for Exeter, which wrote another page in its history with the opening of an extension to the Breccia stand, complete with a new owners' and trainers' bar, hospitality suites and betting hall.



Might And Power holds on by a short head to beat Dorienus in a thrilling finish to the Melbourne Cup

## Harbour Dues has rough passage

FROM BRIAN MELBURN IN MELBOURNE

MISFORTUNE in running may well have cost Harbour Dues a victory in the Melbourne Cup yesterday. Ridden by Ray Cochrane, the five-year-old came with a storming run over the last two furlongs to finish fourth, a length behind the winner, Might And Power, the 7-2 favourite. The Queen's Arabian Story also ran a creditable race to finish sixth, and he too might have finished closer but for a slow start.

Harbour Dues suffered interference four furlongs from home which Cochrane believed cost him a higher placing. "It was not the interference, he reported, but him further back than he wanted to be on the home turn, and left him with some eight lengths to make up on Might And Power, who made all of the running. "At the top of the straight I thought we had a bit of running to do, but I knew we had plenty left," Cochrane said.

Greg Hall, the rider of Dorienus, was given a severe reprimand for causing the interference which cost Harbour Dues

more than the margin by which he was beaten.

Lady Herries was delighted with the performance of Harbour Dues and immediately announced plans to bring him back next year. "It was a fantastic run," she said. "He just drew when he got out. Everyone wrote him off, but we knew he would run well."

Arabian Story ran into some minor interference early in the race, but his rider, Frankie Dettori, still considered he had a winning chance four furlongs out.

## BIG-RACE DETAILS

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D.30 POSTERS MELBOURNE CUP (Parade): 1985, 2m  
1. MIGHT AND POWER (J. Cassidy, 7-2 fav); 2. DORIEUS (J. Hall, 5-1); 3. MIGHT AND POWER (J. Cassidy, 7-2 fav); 4. HARBOR DUES (R. Cochrane, 40-1); 5. ARABIAN STORY (F. Dettori, 10-1); 6. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 7. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 8. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 9. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 10. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 11. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 12. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 13. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 14. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 15. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 16. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 17. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 18. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 19. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 20. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 21. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 22. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 23. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 24. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 25. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 26. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 27. LADY HERRIES (J. Cassidy, 10-1); 28. 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## Feyenoord fearful as Ferguson's free-scoring team aims to continue European adventure

## United put accent on fluency in Dutch test

FROM OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT IN ROTTERDAM

THEY know here. In the heartland of Dutch football, that Manchester United have scored 13 goals in their past two games. They know that their visitors are on a hot streak and, when the English champions landed here yesterday, they were ready for their European Cup Champions' League tie against Feyenoord.

United are leaving a trail of woe and destruction behind them as they go, rampaging through the FA Carling Premiership and carrying all before them in Europe, too. The way things are going, opposing coaches will soon be

Feyenoord last month had suffered the team to their subsequent superlative performances against Barnsley and Wednesday.

"We have played games this season where we did not take all our chances," Schmeichel said. "I thought the Feyenoord match was one where we should have done much better and we went into the Barnsley game saying to ourselves that what we did in that match was not right. Then we went out and scored seven goals. It was a good response."

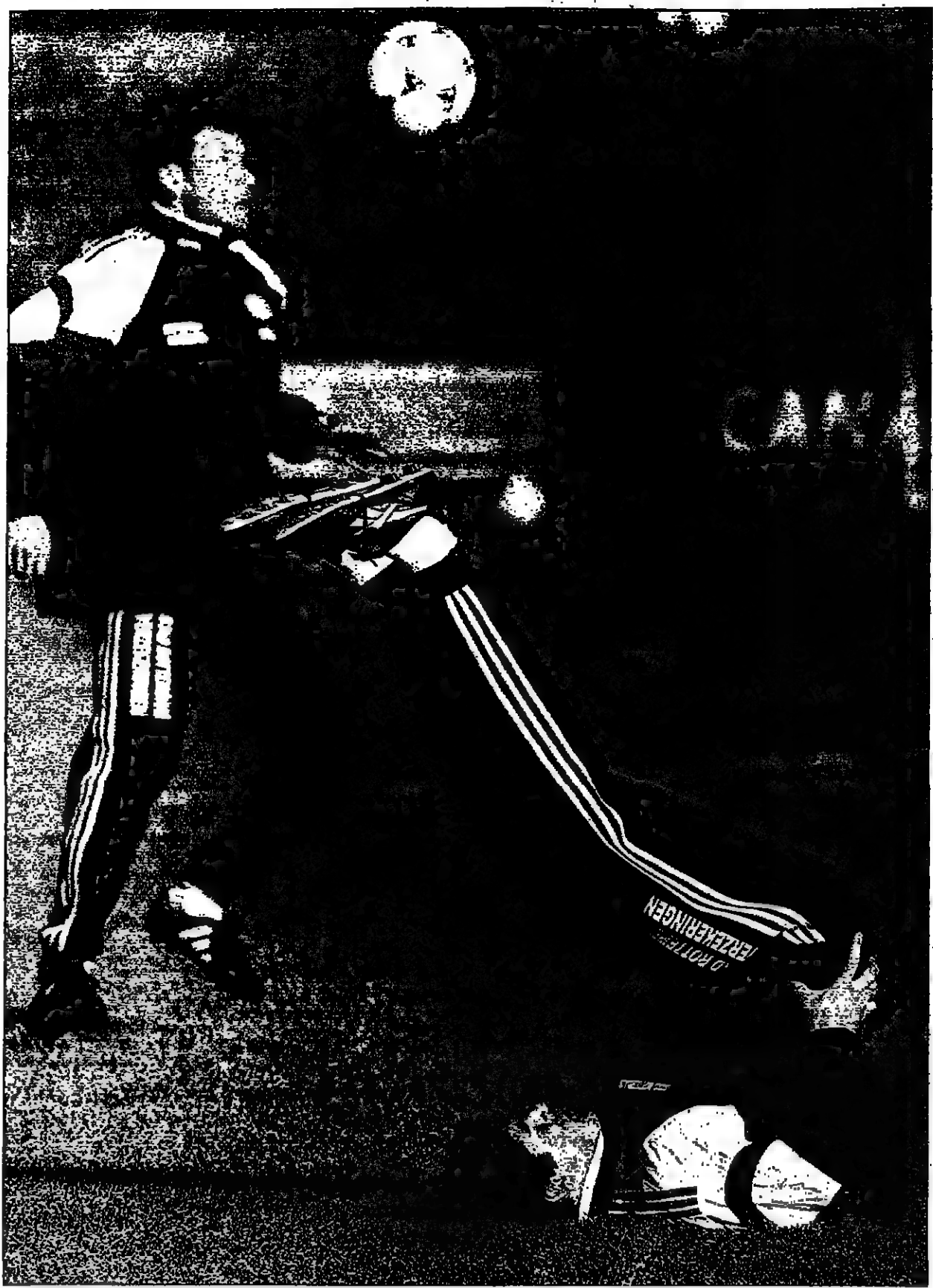
"We have all really enjoyed the Champions' League this season. We realise we have got a chance of winning it. We are more determined now. We also know we did not do as well as we should have done last year, but we learnt a lot from that and that is evident from the way we are playing. We feel we have found a way to play these games. We have found the necessary patience and discipline. We have got that recipe right now."

Feyenoord, by contrast, seem to be struggling with a mix of unpalatable ingredients. Their loss at Old Trafford was followed by a 4-0 walloping at the hands of their great rivals, Ajax, which was the last straw for Haan. Geert Meijer, his assistant, was given temporary control, but some reports suggest that Feyenoord are about to appoint Leo Beenhakker, the former Real Madrid coach, as Haan's full-time successor.

United should be too strong for the Dutch and a win in the De Kuip Stadium, coupled with the formality of victory over FC Koosje in a fortnight, is almost certain to see United through to the quarter-finals.

"We have got off to a dream start," Ferguson said. "We have now got to aim to win the group. If we do that, that is it. Everyone has a chance in football and so do Feyenoord tomorrow. I have seen some funny results in my life and that won't stop, but hopefully there won't be one here."

Peter Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper and captain, gave an eloquent explanation of how attitudes have changed. He even suggested that the narrow margin of United's victory against



Vos, left, and Cruz put their back into training as Feyenoord prepare for their Champions' League match tonight

## Parma pledge to attack in Dortmund

BORUSSIA Dortmund, the defending European champions, who have won only three matches out of 13 in the Bundesliga this season, will hope to recapture at least some of last season's form when they entertain Parma in tonight's European Cup Champions' League match, having lost 1-0 in Italy a fortnight ago.

A win would take the Germans to the top of group A, the only one in which the top two clubs play each other tonight. Carlo Ancelotti, the Parma coach, has picked an attacking side, hoping to take

advantage of the absence of several key Borussia defenders. Ancelotti said Saturday's 1-0 league defeat by Internazionale, which dropped Parma to third place in Serie A, was a "normal episode against a powerful opponent". He added: "Our teamwork should prevail."

Nevio Scala, the former Parma coach who is now in charge at Dortmund, will be without the injured Matthias Sammer, Jürgen Kohler and Stéphane Chapuisat. "If you want to visit the Dortmund team, you have to drive to the hospital," *Gazzetta dello Sport* said

recently. "We're not dead. We'll play a great game," Scala promised on behalf of his patched-up side.

In group D, Real Madrid, who have nine points after three matches, will be without Roberto Carlos, who is suspended, against Olympique. The Spaniards beat the Greeks 5-1 two weeks ago.

Bayern Munich, who lead group E, are expecting tough opposition from Paris Saint-Germain, who have won only one of three games. "For Paris, it's the last chance, they will try to explode," Thomas Helmer, the Bayern captain, said.

## Dalglish forced to put trust in Tomasson

BY DAVID MADDOCK

IT MIGHT seem heretical to suggest it, but Kenny Dalglish is an amusing, affable character. Outside a small circle of friends, however, it is a closely guarded secret.

The Newcastle United manager has always suffered from a negative image in the media, mostly because he cannot suppress a natural, suspicious instinct. His press conferences can be tortuous. Yet, for all the abrasiveness of, for example, Alex Ferguson, when Ferguson is liked, the whole world knows it. With Dalglish, it is barely detectable, beyond, perhaps, a frostier edge to his tart utterances.

Yesterday, looking forward to Newcastle's European Cup Champions' League contest with PSV Eindhoven tonight, he was unusually instructive. Gone was the Siberian silence, replaced by a rare passion in his condemnation of what he perceives as an unjust dismissal of his side's capabilities.

He talked of "a defeatist attitude that hangs around the club like a bad smell". The odour, you will not be surprised to hear, was generated by the media. There has been a disparaging attitude towards his side, he said, despite a reasonable start in the FA Carling Premiership and a better than expected showing in the Champions' League.

"We have had trying circumstances and yet performed with pride in adversity," he said. "Look at our results and then say that we are not producing. We beat Barcelona and they proved when they won 3-2 at Real Madrid the other night that they are indisputably a great side. They are seven points clear in Spain and that says it all. We drew in Kiev, and Dynamo beat Barcelona 3-0. I think that result was far better than we got the credit for."

"We did lose against PSV, but they are a very good side, too. We came away from Holland with people talking as if they were an easy team to play, but they are a very dangerous side and people who say otherwise are just trying to distort our situation."

Yet, for all his passion, there is a pessimism seeping into even the most ardent of Newcastle supporters. Dalglish is right to point to important results in Europe and the Premiership, but most were achieved with the help of Faustino Asprilla. Without him, the team is impotent. The loss of Alan Shearer was a bad

enough blow, but Asprilla could lead the line capably alone. Without him, there is no threat to leading European defences. Tonight, Dalglish will be without the suspended David Baity and Robert Lee, as well as Ian Rush, Newcastle's one remaining striker, who has undergone a cartilage operation. Add to that doubts about Gillespie, Barton and Pistone and Newcastle's squad is severely stretched.

Much responsibility now falls on the shoulders of Jon Dahl Tomasson, the young Dane who scored his first goal for the club on Saturday. That, at least, was a relief. "I have been under pressure in the last couple of weeks, but not just from the lack of a goal," Tomasson said yesterday. "I have been trying to adjust to a new position as well. I have always played in midfield before and now I am playing with my back to goal. But I believe in myself in front of goal and I will always give my all."

## GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo Kiev	3	2	1	0	8	3	7
Newcastle Utd.	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
PSV Eindhoven	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Borussia Dortmund	3	0	2	1	4	5	2

RESULTS: PSV Eindhoven 1, Dynamo Kiev 2; Newcastle 3, Borussia Dortmund 2; Newcastle 2, Dynamo Kiev 2; Newcastle 2, PSV Eindhoven 0.

MATCHES TO COME: Today: Borussia Dortmund v Newcastle; Newcastle v PSV Eindhoven; Nov 26: Feyenoord v Ajax; Nov 27: Manchester United v FC Koosje; Dec 10: FC Koosje v Feyenoord; Juventus v Manchester United.

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PSV Eindhoven (probable 4-4-2): S. Shearer, D. Asprilla, J. Tomasson, D. Baity, R. Lee, I. Rush, G. Gillespie, J. Barton, P. Pistone, D. Baity.

Borussia Dortmund (probable 4-4-2): S. Shearer, D. Asprilla, J. Tomasson, D. Baity, R. Lee, I. Rush, G. Gillespie, J. Barton, P. Pistone, D. Baity.

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## LIVE EUROPEAN FOOTBALL

9/4 FEYENOORD 12/5 DRAW MAN. UTD. 10/11  
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### CORRECT SCORE DOUBLE RESULT

FEYENOORD TO BE	MAN. UTD.	HT/FT	FT/FT
7/1	1-0	5/1	FEYENOORD FEYENOORD 9/2
11/1	2-0	7/1	FEYENOORD DRAW 14/1
11/1	2-1	7/1	FEYENOORD MAN. UTD. 25/1
33/1	3-0	14/1	DRAW FEYENOORD 13/2
33/1	3-1	16/1	DRAW DRAW 9/2
33/1	3-2	33/1	DRAW MAN. UTD. 9/2
6/1	0-0	5/1	MAN. UTD. FEYENOORD 33/1
5/1	1-1	5/1	MAN. UTD. DRAW 14/1
20/1	2-2	20/1	MAN. UTD. MAN. UTD. 2/1

Other scores on request. Bets void if 2nd half not started.

LATEST ODDS ON WIRELESS SEE TV TODAY - Teletext on CH4 950/960/970

William Hill

10/11 A CREDIT A TELEPHONE RESPONSE 0800 44 40 40, WILLIAM HILL ARE A P.P.S. (P) 1997 SUBJECT TO REGULATION

## Rioch and Hamilton eye vacancy at Wednesday

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

BRUCE RIOCH, the former Arsenal manager, and Bryan Hamilton, recently dismissed by Northern Ireland, yesterday expressed an interest







## Sack race that produces no winners

The nights are drawing in. Vast groups of starlings wheel in the air. Infallible signs of the turning of the year — mark my words, the sacking season is upon us again.

The first manager to be sacked from a Premiership club was David Platt, who, it seems, got the verdict on the nod from Gerry Francis. And so, like the Tom Lehrer song about the acquisition of nuclear weapons, we sing: "Who's next? Who's next?"

The first point is that no one in the bottom half of the table is safe. The second point is that no one in the top half of the table is safe, either. If you finish consistently second and you don't sack your manager, you are telling the world that you are satisfied with second-best.

Roy Evans is one of the most decent men in football, but he is the Liverpool manager and Liverpool keep on not winning the championship. His days are numbered. Arsène Wenger made a mistake start to the season with

Arsenal, but now his side have slipped back. This weekend, they must play Manchester United. Will that be the beginning of the end?

Alex Ferguson at Manchester United is the only Premiership manager with a safe job. Or is he? His effortless domination of the Premiership has become a bit of a bore. If he draws a blank in Europe yet again, will it be time for a change?

Wild speculation about managerial futures is an essential aspect of football. If you don't win matches, you always sack the manager — as if he were out there letting in goals, missing sitters and awarding dodgy penalties.

Managing a football team is a fantasy among adult men, but it is a very poor one. A football manager has the very opposite of a satisfying job: he has responsibility without power.

It is the chairman that has it the right way round. When you get it right, take the credit. When it all goes wrong, you always have a manager to sack. There are only two courses of action

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

open to you. You can either sack the manager, or you can sack the manager.

So, at moments of crisis, when you want to "send a message to the supporters" that, though the seas are rough and the weather vile, you are steering the ship confidently towards haven, you have only one possible course of action — and chairmen always take it. Let's face it, they love doing it.

Sacking is accepted, even required behaviour. No one considers the truth that a sacking says more about the person who made the appointment than it does about the person sacked.

Who demands a sacking? Chairmen sack because the media expects it. The media expects it because the fans demand it. The fans demand it because it always happens.

Why? It can hardly be that a sound footballing man such as Platt becomes an unsound footballing man in the space of a few weeks.

What does a sacking actually do? Why, it prepares the way for the next sacking, what else? A new manager comes new-brooming in, has his honeymoon and his players, cheered and filled with desire to impress, play above themselves for a few weeks. And the cycle continues. The players sink back to their accustomed level of performance, bad results bring misery, the team plays below its potential, worse results follow and the manager is sacked and the new one

comes in. Please return to the top of the paragraph.

Managers are sacked because it is the custom, nothing else. Sackings are made with no thought for long-term planning, no thought for football. It is invariably a matter of power-conscious chairmen without a thought in their heads mindlessly conforming to the culture of the sack.

A sporting management to control the uncontrollable. For a chairman, sacking is the sole medium for control at his disposal. It is not a very effective one, but at least, for the glorious few days of their sacking, the new appointment and the honeymoon, it hands him the illusion of control. For a brief moment, it masks the truth of football, the truth every manager and every chairman knows but dare not admit — that the game is not about managers and chairmen at all. It is about players. Fact the clubs that sack the most generally achieve the least. Run coincidence, that.

GOLF: EUROPEAN SEASON NOTABLE FOR ONE MAN'S HEARTWARMING COMEBACK

## Year that Olazabal walked tall

By JOHN HOPKINS  
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

THE 1997 European Tour began in Queensland, Australia, in January and ended in Jerez, Spain last Sunday. After the equivalent of several circumnavigations of the globe, the season has generated a multitude of images that jostle one another in the mind's eye.

There was the sight of Severiano Ballesteros holding up the Ryder Cup in September. In June, Colin Montgomerie had struggled with his composure after nearly winning the US Open. Early in the season, David Carter was saved from death in Dubai by the decisive action of his colleagues. One early autumn day, Bernhard Langer, in a small town in Germany, went round a good course in good condition in 60. A few weeks later, Joakim Haeggman threatened to heap indignity upon the St Andrews by taking 27 strokes for his outward half on the Old Course.

Yet the most dominant memory of all is of a Spaniard in Dubai in February, beneath a midday sun. Mad dogs and Englishmen and all that, but José María Olazabal could not wait to hit his first competitive strokes after a 17-month absence because of a medical condition that threatened his career. He walked like a man being buffeted from side to side by a beachfront wind. A cap threatened to fall over his eyes, except that it was stopped from doing so by his ears. Sergio Gomez, his manager, carried a cigar the size of a telegraph pole as he followed his man. He would light it only to celebrate the completion of 18 holes. Nine months earlier, Olazabal could hardly walk; now he was playing like a man who had never been away, birdies on three of the last four holes helping him to a round of 69.



Olazabal, restored to fitness, in fighting form during the Ryder Cup

held. Odd and headless indeed would be anyone unmoved by the sight of Olazabal crying in pleasure after his third tournament after his comeback: the second at the Ryder Cup two months ago. As is often the case, the sight of a strong man weeping did not diminish the regard in which he is

executive director of the European Tour, said.

It was the year in which Montgomerie won only two tournaments, yet played well enough overall to capture a record fifth successive Order of Merit. Langer won four tournaments, yet could only come second. It was the year in which Ballesteros, Nick Faldo and Langer all turned 40. And it was the last year in which Montgomerie will devote as much time to competing in Europe as he has in the past.

With Montgomerie less in evidence, will there be a paucity of talent or will the new generation continue to progress until his absence is hardly noticed, much as Faldo has not been missed since he quit Europe?

Montgomerie named Thomas Bjorn, Darren Clarke, Ignacio Garrido, Per-Ulrik Johansson and Lee Westwood as the young men of the future. Of these, Johansson, 30, is the pick. Westwood, 24, is the youngest and after playing well in the four major championships, in which his average finishing position was twentieth, he is the most promising, too. It is to be hoped that they can all reach a position to guarantee themselves places in the World Golf Championship events that start in 1999.

A year ago, almost to the day, John Parman, the director of European Tour operations, spoke of having to "sew up the dagger holes in the back of my jacket. We need to smarten up our act." A lot of smartening remains to be done. The handling of the Miguel Angel Martin affair remains as indefensible in November as it was at the time. Slow play and poorly-prepared courses, whether because of incompetence, incorrect direction or commercial interests, are just two blights on the face of the Tour. A lack of manners by players towards the hand that feeds them is a curse, too.

### EUROPEAN ORDER OF MERIT

LEADING FINAL POSITIONS:	1. C. Montgomerie (Scot) £798,947; 2. B. Langer (Ger) £522,386; 3. L. Westwood (Eng) £520,718; 4. D. Carter (Ire) £517,409; 5. J. Woollam (Wales) £510,562; 6. J. Garrido (Esp) £411,479; 7. R. Goosen (RSA) £384,897; 8. P. Harrington (Ire) £358,982; 9. J. M. Olazabal (Esp) £358,648; 10. P. Karlsson (Swe) £354,562; 11. P. J. Hartman (Swe) £354,562; 12. R. C. Crahan (Eng) £315,077; 13. E. Romero (Arg) £290,489; 14. M. James (Ire) £271,510; 15. T. Bjorn (Den) £265,688; 16. J. Russell (Scot) £265,688; 17. P. S. Skelton (Scot) £245,274; 18. G. Turner (NZ) £239,889; 19. J. Hoggan (Scot) £237,347; 20. J. C. Clayton (Eng) £225,008; 21. P. McIlroy (Ire) £220,276; 22. P. O'Malley (Ire) £208,340; 23. S. Stone (Scot) £207,006; 24. P. Baker (Eng) £200,820; 25. P. Broadhurst (Eng) £198,820; 26. J. McFarlane (Eng) £187,347; 27. M. Martin (Scot) £187,289; 28. J. Sandelin (Swe) £184,981; 29. J. Coore (Eng) £184,332; 30. S. R. Green (Aus) £174,727; 31. D. Gadd (Eng) £182,618; 32. R. Chapman (Eng) £182,354; 33. D. Carter (Eng) £177,882; 34. J. J. Jones (Scot) £170,118; 35. J. Spence (Eng) £160,986; 36. N. Fash (Swe) £159,370; 37. M. A. Lander (Scot) £158,410; 38. G. Bland (Scot) £155,425; 39. P. Price (Wales) £151,002; 40. P. Mitchell (Eng) £148,322; 41. D. Edmund (Scot) £147,000; 42. M. Long (NZ) £144,314; 43. A. Forsbrand (Swe) £141,727; 44. J. J. Jones (Scot) £140,078; 45. A. Collier (Scot) £140,042; 46. D. Howell (Eng) £137,793; 47. P. Lander (Scot) £134,527; 48. G. Bland (Scot) £133,541; 49. W. Westler (SA) £129,452.
Leading money-winners in Europe	1996: B. Hunt £7,208; 1995: N. Coles £7,069; 1994: P. Thomson £7,011; 1993: B. Devlin £7,205; 1992: G. Brewer £20,226; 1991: G. Brewer £20,226; 1990: B. Capper £28,493; 1989: C. O'Connor £31,822; 1988: J. Player £31,281; 1987: R. Oakes £31,281; 1986: A. Lyle £31,281; 1985: P. Oosthuis £32,127; 1984: D. Hayes £30,507; 1983: S. Ballesteros £29,224; 1982: S. Ballesteros £29,224; 1981: S. Ballesteros £29,224; 1980: A. Lyle £29,224; 1979: A. Lyle £29,224; 1978: A. Lyle £29,224; 1977: S. Ballesteros £29,224; 1976: S. Ballesteros £29,224; 1975: A. Lyle £29,224; 1974: A. Lyle £29,224; 1973: A. Lyle £29,224; 1972: A. Lyle £29,224; 1971: A. Lyle £29,224; 1970: A. Lyle £29,224; 1969: A. Lyle £29,224; 1968: A. Lyle £29,224; 1967: A. Lyle £29,224; 1966: A. Lyle £29,224; 1965: A. Lyle £29,224; 1964: A. Lyle £29,224; 1963: A. Lyle £29,224; 1962: A. Lyle £29,224; 1961: A. Lyle £29,224; 1960: A. Lyle £29,224; 1959: A. Lyle £29,224; 1958: A. Lyle £29,224; 1957: A. 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ofty ambition

# Lady and gentlemen, you've been framed

Sooner or later somebody was going to remember about "Lambert" and "laughter". The only real question was whether it would be the male sex or Gillian DuCharme, headmistress of Benenden. Last night, both waited patiently for the smooth-talking documentary makers to cut off their heads.

The men, bless 'em, were all puppy-dog eyed. Told that this was their chance to say what they really meant about women drivers, they rather sweetly believed it. *Cutting Edge: Women Drivers* (Channel 4) was clearly going to be a treat.

"What I don't understand," said one, his elbow assuming the approved driver-dog position for advanced philosophising, "is why women's insurance is so cheap when they cause all the accidents." A lot of other chaps nodded their agreement. The trouble with women, began another from that

haven of reason, the white van, is that they're the gentler sex. "And that's no good out here. I suppose that's why they don't fight wars — it's like a war out here." That was certainly the way he drove.

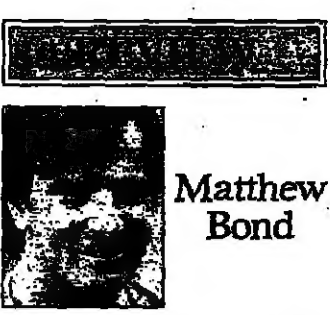
Whether women fight wars or not (hasn't it changed recently?) was really neither here nor there. What they do make are good documentaries, as Ella Bahaire showed. Hers was a film very much in the lightweight spirit of this new *Cutting Edge* series, which appears to have carried on where BBC's *Driving School* left off. Nothing sensational, nothing that requires months of investigation, just a documentary series driven by a single thought: how many people can we get to watch?

Bahaire's first priority was to entertain. If that meant some of her action was modestly staged (at one point I thought she had Paul Whitehouse playing a London cabbie) then so be it, that is the

fashion among makers of popular documentaries. But she also managed to be interesting, if not necessarily convincing, about why upper-middle-class mothers feel safer doing the school run in four-wheel-drive Jeeps, and why anonymity is a key component of the road rage. Well, think of the shame if anybody we knew saw us.

Most of all, however, it was a chance to have a go at men. She had the statistics, showing that men were responsible for at least 90 per cent of everything (men, of course, already knew that). She had Lee and his white vanload of testosterone. And she had a pet psychotherapist to reveal that male behaviour behind the wheel came down to "fear of castration". Her closing shot of Justin, a blow-up male passenger, a deflating was deliciously apposite.

The male sex did not have to



Matthew Bond

wait long for revenge, although even the toughest among them may not have had the stomach for *Back to the Floor* (BBC2). This was going to be vicious, as its innocent victim already had an inkling. "I feel just like a sacrificial lamb going to the slaughter," said Gillian DuCharme as she began a week of working as a cover teacher at an East London comprehensive. And this was just morning assem-

bly, her English and French lessons were still to come. Suddenly the leafy and very expensive tranquillity of Benenden seemed a long way away.

At times, Adam Wishart's film was almost too painful to watch. DuCharme ("I haven't met many DuCharmes," observed the comprehensive headmaster) carried as game and magnificently honest when her week on the wild side ended, to all intents and purposes, in failure. "If anyone got it wrong it was me, not them. But they [Class 9T] didn't help."

But DuCharme also emerged as naive, and not just in entrusting her reputation to a fly-on-the-blackboard film crew. "I didn't know whether you'd be black or white," she laughed as she met the Forest Gate headmaster. "Or Indian," she added as a broad-minded interrupter taking the register to ask a pupil if he was from Nigeria. The

boy looked puzzled. He thought he was from Forest Gate.

The film was certainly no advertisement for comprehensive teaching, despite the passionate but rarely heard beliefs (it may have been wicked editing, but DuCharme appeared immensely fond of the sound of her own voice) of the Forest Gate staff. Teaching an understated class of 30, including pupils with special needs, appeared to be an exercise designed to stretch just one individual — the teacher.

But nor was it much of a commercial for private education. Anybody who believes that a school where the fees are £14,000 a year is a "microcosm of society" really ought to have the good sense not to say so in the middle of a East London school struggling to get by on an annual budget of £1,400 per pupil. By one of those strange tele-

vision coincidences, the headmaster in *Underworld*, played by Owen Brennan in Channel 4's new comedy drama, bore a truly remarkable resemblance to the Forest Gate headmaster, James Fleet. However, playing William Smith, the customary common-room authority, here he seemed to be a headmaster. He settled a noisy classroom with a stage whisper, gently rebuked an Asian pupil for wearing trainers (don't tell me, it's a central tenet of Islam!) and drove home in his 2CV to discover that his young wife had left him and stolen his belongings.

Andy Hamilton's script was at times very funny, at others just a little on the slow side. But most of all, at least on the evidence of this opening episode, his mix of the suburban with the surreally sinister bears a really uncanny resemblance to Alan Plater's *The Beiderbecke Affair*. Still, if Plater doesn't mind...

## BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (65852)
- 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (7) (64940)
- 8.00am Not Cook, Won't Cook (7) (590650)
- 9.25am Style Challenge Four liberators from Bristol (592778)
- 9.50am Killy (7) (5252517)
- 10.30am Change That in Sheffield (4533619)
- 10.55am The Really Useful Show Featuring the long-complainer David Walliams (7312389)
- 11.35am Real Rooms A bathroom in Bath (5963150)
- 12.00pm News (7) and weather (6659221)
- 12.05pm Call My Bluff (6416619)
- 12.35pm Going for a Song (2021018)
- 1.00pm News (7) and weather (74327)
- 1.30pm Regional News (7) (6473230)
- 1.40pm The Weather Show (5923485)
- 1.45pm Neighbours (7) (6714930)
- 2.10pm Quinny (7) (2307389)
- 3.00pm World on a Plate Food preservation (4766)
- 3.30pm Playdays (7) (5958553) 3.50pm Chuckydick (7) (5953395) 4.10pm Get Your Own Back (7) (521151) 4.35pm Out of Tune (7) (118544) 4.50pm Newsround (7) (5923478) 5.10pm Blue Peter (7) (9774476)
- 5.35pm Neighbours (7) (718056)
- 6.00pm News (7) and weather (565)
- 6.30pm Regional News (7) (149)
- 7.00pm Face Value Finest hour, a "wonder class" for business, paying up to £300 a week for taking shopping, doing diets (7) (6747)
- 7.30pm Tomorrow's World: Jazz Nelson reports from Singapore on a nursery which introduces toddlers to the latest computer technology. Plus, the perfect sniffer dog in Australia (7) (527)
- 8.00pm Beat Maryn Lewis daives into the burler alarm business (7) (5495)
- 8.30pm The National Lottery Live with American pop group N-Sync (7) (108414)
- 8.45pm Points of View (7) (190337)
- 9.00pm News (7) and weather (3872)
- 9.25pm National Lottery Update (592921)
- 9.50pm Absolutely Fabulous Patsy's sister pays a visit (7) (14360)
- 10.00pm The X-Files: Terence (2/2) Mulder escapes the Russian gulag but Scully refuses to reveal his whereabouts to the higher authorities (7) (522530)
- 10.45pm Full Circle with Michael Palin (7) (7) (592522) WALE: 10.45pm A Touch of Classical (592522) 1.10pm Circle with Michael Palin (592522) 12.05pm Welsh Questions (1428996) 12.35pm The Richard Dimbleby Lecture (7341253) 1.20pm A Time of Destiny (592771) 3.10pm News and weather (592885)
- 2.10pm Weather (592885)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes. The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes, which allow you to programme your video recorder to record a particular programme. To use the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record, VideoPlus+ (V), PlusCode (P) and Video Programme (V) are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

## SKY MOVIES GOLD

- 4.00pm The Sea Chase (1985) (140652)
- 6.00pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 6.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 6.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 7.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 7.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 7.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 8.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 8.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 8.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 9.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 9.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 9.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 10.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 10.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 10.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 11.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 11.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 11.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 12.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 12.30pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 12.50pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 1.10pm The Railway Children (1970) (2585252) 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## RACING 47

Favourite holds on to bring home Melbourne Cup

## SPORT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 5 1997

## GOLF 50

Olazabal's recovery makes for memorable year



BAF cash crisis takes heavy toll

# Britain drop top coaches in shake-up

BY JOHN GOODBODY

SOME of Great Britain's most distinguished coaches, who have produced Olympic and world champions such as Sally Gunnell and Jonathan Edwards, were yesterday among 21 people made redundant by the British Athletic Federation (BAF).

Administrators at the national governing body are to pay off Bruce Longden, mentor of Gunnell, and Carl Johnson, coach to Edwards, in reducing the total BAF payroll from 34 to 13. The national governing body faces debts of £500,000 and has running costs of £130,000 a month.

However, many of the coaches may be employed by constituent members of the BAF, such as the Amateur Athletic Association of England, with assets of more than £1 million, or by the individual athletes.

Jayne Pearce, the BAF spokeswoman, said: "Dave Moorcroft [the new chief executive] and the rest of the professional staff in our office will, for the time being, carry on, but the future is by no means certain."

Moorcroft, who took up his £70,000-a-year job only a month ago, vowed that British athletics would be in a better long-term position after the administrators had completed their job and he stressed that the crisis would not prevent top-level athletes from competing in international events.

The former world 5,000 metres record-holder said: "I think in the long term there will be a better structure for the delivery of the sport in this country. It's really depressing to see the administrators making these decisions, but you have got to be positive and think something better and stronger will come out of it."

Moorcroft told *Radio 5 Live*: "At the moment, it is very

difficult to be positive. You have to feel sorry for the 21 people who have lost their jobs."

As well as Longden and Johnson, the BAF is likely to lose Peter Warden, the North West coach, David Lease, in the West, Brad McStravick, in the North East, and Brian Hall, Andy Vince and Phil Barning, the national coaches of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales respectively.

Pearce said: "We are hoping that the coaches will be able to carry on with their roles in



Arnold: excellence

some shape or form, perhaps with funding from the region. However, we are not able to fund them. It is obviously a very sad day for everyone at the BAF."

The BAF still has four technical directors — Norman Brook (endurance), Graham Knight (sprints and hurdles), Max Jones (throws) and Tudor Bidder (jumps and combined events) — and they will oversee the top 190 athletes under the direction of Malcolm Arnold.

Arnold said: "I am just hoping that the other organisations in athletics will help in the short term. We are looking now at a leaner,

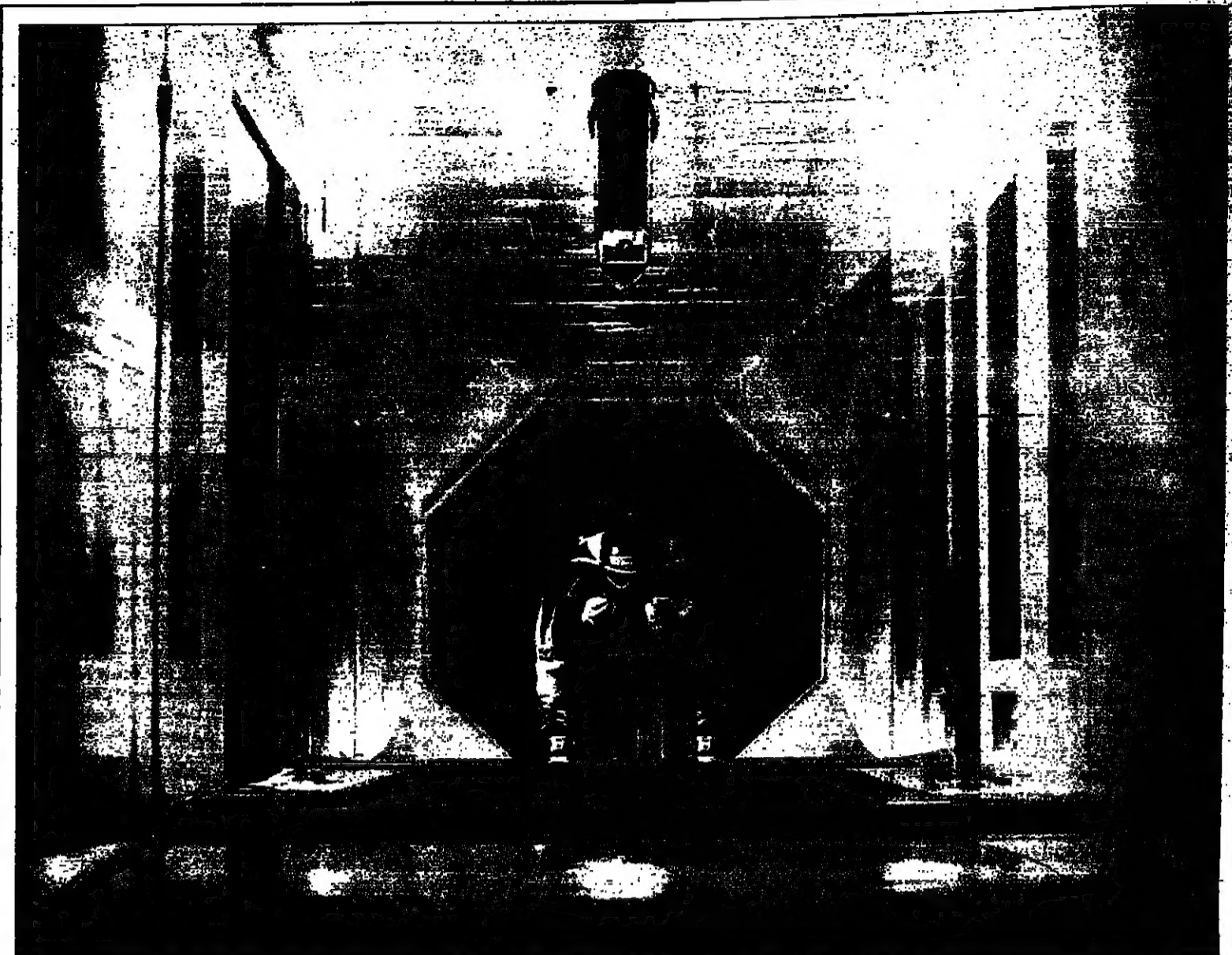
meaner machine, a more professional set-up. There remains a residual excellence in the sport. Britain are, after all, European Cup-holders."

He forecast that, unless more money became available, the sport would suffer in the long term, with the danger that youngsters would go out of athletics. Technical publications, for which British athletics is renowned, would also be affected. Longden said that he had feared the redundancies would be coming. He agreed with Arnold that youngsters would be the ones to "miss out."

"The top echelon is ring-fenced," he said, "but the youngsters will be thinking: 'How am I going to break through in this sport?' There may not be the regional support. We are responsible for the education courses and the performance training weekends. Who is now going to pay for these facilities?"

The Birmingham-based BAF, formed in 1991 despite constant bickering among its national and regional constituent members, has been dogged by financial problems. Television revenue and sponsorship have fallen. Much of the television money and sponsorship money have often gone to other flourishing organisations in athletics, such as the London Marathon, with its own office, professional staff and high profile. The BAF has also had to suffer hefty legal costs.

The BAF has not ruled out selling its own premises in an attempt to avert bankruptcy, while the immediate future of domestic showpiece events remains shrouded in uncertainty because of the financial problems. The answer to its troubles may be a national registration scheme, which exists in other Olympic sports, such as swimming, rowing, judo and weightlifting. Even at £10 per head, this could raise an estimated £1 million a year, with the BAF also able to sell its registration list to sports goods manufacturers.



Graham Bell, the leading British downhill skier, tests the new Jordan wind tunnel in Brackley, Northamptonshire. The tunnel has been built to enhance training facilities for the 1998 Winter Olympic Games. Photograph: Mike Cooper / Allsport

## Contrite Tyson says he fears life ban

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT, IN LAS VEGAS

MIKE TYSON believes that he will never get back his licence to box. The former world heavyweight champion, who was indefinitely suspended for biting a piece out of Evander Holyfield's ear in a world title bout in June, told ABC television in New York on Monday night: "Truly, I think I'll be banned for the rest of my life."

It was Tyson's first appearance on network television since being disqualified and forced out of boxing in disgrace. Tyson said: "I truly think everyone hates me. I truly believe that, because no one gets punished more than I am. But I understand, I'm a big boy and I believe big boys have big ordeals to be dealt with."

Tyson thought that people wanted him to beg for mercy. "I'm not that way," he said. "This is who I am and maybe

sometimes it's the insecurity. I want to be the defiant person. That's part of my insecurity but, you know, it's just who I am."

Having viewed tapes of the biting incident, Tyson said that his action left him with a feeling of "disgust, disdain and humiliation." He added: "I shouldn't have done that. It was just striking out. I was totally hatred right there. I shouldn't have done that, because that was one moment, I just forgot he was a human being."

"It was extremeness. There was some serious stuff going on in my head. I just snapped. I was no longer playing under the rules. Any kind of functional thinking, any kind of rational thinking, that was totally out the window. Once the boundaries were crossed,

I had no more respect for the rules."

Tyson, who was joined for part of the interview by his wife, Dr Monica Turner, and three of their children, said he was undergoing therapy. "It's



Tyson: interview

kind of scary to change and feel a little helpless in changing," he said. "We are working on it and hopefully it will turn out better. I don't know why I'm afraid to change. I change in moments. It's not going to happen overnight."

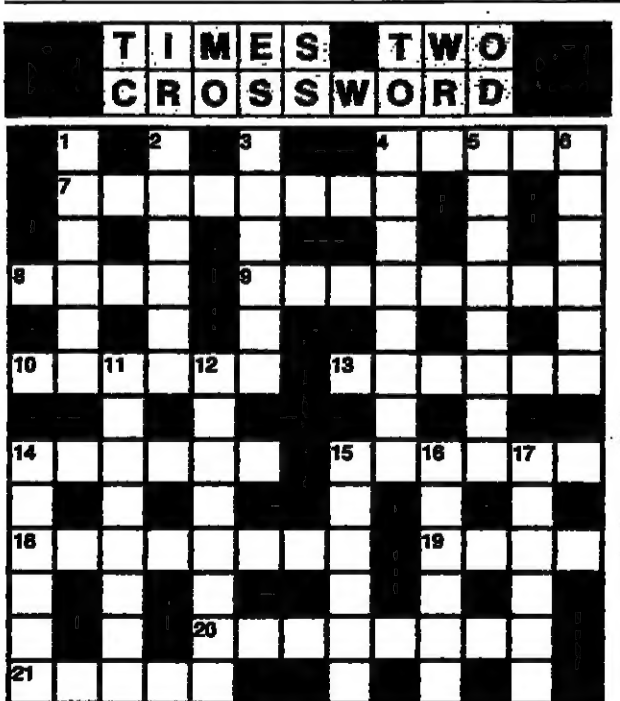
Holyfield said he forgave Tyson, but did not think they would meet in the ring again. "He is sorry and he felt that he did it out of anger, which everyone knows," Holyfield said. "I'm friends with him anyway. I love him. I forgive him. It's not so much that he has to apologise, he did already, but I don't think I would fight him again."

Tyson's fears are understandable, for immediately after the bout many people said that they wanted him banned for life. They were disappointed that the Nevada

State Athletic Commission told Tyson he could make an application for a licence after a year. The decision to give an interview could be part of an attempt to condition the thinking of the commission, especially as it is generally believed that it will almost certainly extend the ban for another year.

An exclusion of 12 months is regarded in boxing as being no punishment at all, but Tyson's moroseness is not reflected in the thinking of the commission here. Even though MGM Grand has ended its deal with Don King, Tyson's promoter, the casino is not against looking at Tyson contests if and when he gets his licence back.

Bill Dook, the publicity director of MGM, said: "When he gets his licence, we will look at his fights, case by case."



No 1243

## ACROSS

- 4 Bifurcates: some cutlery (5)
- 7 Travelling in the sky (8)
- 8 Henry VI's foundation (4)
- 9 Fine, soft, fragile (8)
- 10 Rubber (6)
- 13 Renal organ (6)
- 14 Scout for food (6)
- 15 Solid, durable (6)
- 18 Green wormwood drink (8)
- 19 'L' gives its volume (4)
- 20 Repentant (8)
- 21 Two OT books: Henry VI's other foundation (5)

## DOWN

- 1 Ankle cover, a spat (6)
- 2 Seventh planet out (6)
- 3 Over there (6)
- 4 Women's-rights believer (8)
- 5 Sort of fee: family servant (8)
- 6 One standing bail (6)
- 11 A graze (8)
- 12 Selective-breeding study (8)
- 13 César —, composer (6)
- 15 Midday snooze (6)
- 16 Ragged child (6)
- 17 Main meal of day (6)

## SOLUTION TO NO 1242

- ACROSS: 1 Check off 7 Snide 8 Improvise 9 Log 10 Keel 11 Cherry 13 Silver 14 Scroll 17 Stairs 18 Scud 20 Van 22 Encourage 23 Grind 24 Hebrides  
DOWN: 1 Chink 2 Express 3 Knob 4 Flight 5 Billy 6 Seagull 7 Secrecy 12 Delayed 13 Salvage 15 Orchard 16 Oracle 17 Snail 19 Dress 21 Ruhr

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## West Ham spark blackout inquiry

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

WEST Ham United are still investigating the cause of the floodlight failure that resulted in their FA Cup Premier League match against Crystal Palace being abandoned after 66 minutes on Monday night. The board of the FA Premier League, which runs the Premiership, has also asked for a report on why the lights went out at Upton Park.

Twelve seconds after Frank Lampard had equalised for West Ham, completing their comeback from 2-0 down, the ground was plunged into darkness. Despite efforts to find the fault, the game was called off half an hour later, at 9.50pm. A date has yet to be set for the rearranged fixture. Season ticket-holders will not be affected, but other supporters have been advised to retain their ticket stubs while the club considers offering reduced prices. There will be no refunds, in accordance with League regulations, and it is unlikely that the fans will be given free admission.

There was a fault at the South End, which controls the floodlights for both ends of the ground, and it was impossible to find in the time available," Peter Storrer, the West Ham managing director, said. "Everything has now got to be thoroughly checked and re-checked and that's what we're doing."

For David Elleray, the referee, it was a familiar experience. It was the fourth time in his career that the floodlights had failed while he was officiating — the last being at Crystal Palace. "It was a great shame," he said. "The game was flowing nicely and it hardly needed a ref."



Elleray: no choice

tors were allowed in free — it ended in a 1-1 draw.

West Ham also had to contend with problems off the pitch on Monday night after John Hartson, their Wales striker, was the subject of allegations of drunkenness in an Essex hotel last Thursday morning. He was reportedly arrested by police but subsequently let off with a warning.

"We have spoken to John and he said it was something and nothing," Storrer said. "There was an incident, but it was sorted out. We are happy with his explanation."

## Celtic bringing Lambert home

BY KEVIN MCCARRA

CELTIC are to sign Paul Lambert later this week for £1.75 million. He would then be able to make his debut for the club against Rangers on Saturday.

The transfer is another significant episode in a career that has taken onlookers by surprise. In the summer of 1996, he was a midfield player of modest reputation at Motherwell, but the Bosman ruling persuaded Dortmund to risk employing him since they did not have to pay a fee to the Scottish club. Since then, Lambert has collected a European Cup-winners' medal, having exerted great influence in the 3-1 victory over Juventus in the final, and become a key member of the Scotland team.

He has continued to appear regularly for Dortmund this season, but the club has a new coach, Nevio Scala, who was prepared to countenance the sale. Celtic first considered purchasing him in January and, despite a change of manager, when Wim Jansen was appointed, that interest did not abate, even though negotiations have been tortuous.

Dortmund play Parma in the Champions' League this evening and Lambert, 28, will not be allowed to travel to Glasgow to conclude the deal until tomorrow.

Celtic's backroom upheaval has claimed another casualty, with the departure of David Hay, the assistant general manager, just a week after Danny Craigne, the youth coach, was also deemed surplus to requirements at Parkhead.

This is the second time that

Hay has parted company with the club, having been dismissed as manager in 1987. He was brought as chief scout under Tommy Burns three years ago and acted as caretaker before the arrival of Jansen in the summer.

Darren Jackson, the Celtic striker, was back on target yesterday two months after brain surgery. Jackson, making his first appearance at Parkhead since his operation, equalised for the reserves in their 2-2 draw against Dunfermline, steering home a pass from Tommy Johnson.

Jackson had earlier shown no reservations about heading the ball, powering one effort against the crossbar. He played for the full 90 minutes and Jansen must have been impressed with his display in his third comeback match.

Steve Corica, the Wolverhampton Wanderers midfielder player, has been ruled out for the rest of the season and will miss the World Cup finals if Australia qualify. Corica, 24, who has played only two minutes of first-team football this season, has undergone a total reconstruction of the knee on which he had cruciate ligament surgery in the spring. "There's no explanation why the operation failed and it's just a case now of Steve going through the whole process again," Mark McGhee, the Wolves manager, said. "It is very disappointing for him, especially in World Cup year."

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